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A  
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE  
OF THE  
EUROPEANS  
IN THE  
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BY THE ABBE RAYNAL.

WITH A

*New Set of Maps adapted to the Work, and a copious Index.*

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*Volume first.*

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A  
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY  
OF THE  
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*EUROPEANS*  
IN THE  
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BOOK I.

---

INTRODUCTION.

DISCOVERIES, WARS, AND CONQUESTS, OF THE  
PORTUGUESE IN THE EAST INDIES.

NO event has been so interesting to mankind in general, and to the inhabitants of Europe in particular, as the discovery of the new world, and the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope. It gave rise to a revolution in the commerce, and in the power of nations; as well as in the manners, industry, and government, of the whole world. At this period new connections were formed by the inhabitants of the most distant regions, for the supply of wants they had never before experienced. The productions of climates situated under the equator, were consumed in countries bordering on the pole; the industry of the north was transplanted to the south; and the inhabitants of the west were clothed with the manufactures of the east: a general intercourse of opinions, laws, and customs, diseases and remedies, virtues and vices, was established among men.

Every thing has changed, and must change again. But it is a question whether the revolutions that are past, or those which must hereafter take place, have been, or can be, of any utility to the human race. Will they

ever add to the tranquillity, the happiness, and the pleasures of mankind? Can they improve our present state, or do they only change it?

The Europeans have founded colonies in all parts; but are they acquainted with the principles on which they ought to be formed? They have established a commerce of exchange, of the productions of the earth, and of manufactures. This commerce is transferred from one people to another. Can we not discover by what means, and under what circumstances, this has been effected? Since America and the passage by the Cape has been known, some nations that were of no consequence are become powerful; others, that were the terror of Europe, have lost their authority. In what manner has the condition of these several people been affected by these discoveries? How comes it to pass, that those to whom Nature has been most liberal, are not always the richest and most flourishing? To throw some light on these important questions, we must take a view of the state of Europe before these discoveries were made; we must trace circumstantially the events they have given rise to; and conclude with examining it as it presents itself at this day.

Such is the alarming task I have imposed upon myself, and to which I have devoted my whole life. I have called in to my assistance men of information from all nations. I have interrogated the living and the dead: the living, whose sentiments have been conveyed to me from all quarters; the dead, who have transmitted their opinions and their knowledge to us, in whatever language they may have written. I have weighed their authorities, opposed their testimonies to each other, and by these means have brought facts to light. Had any one pointed out to me a man living under the equator, or under the pole, who might have been able to give me information on any important matter, I would have visited either of those distant regions, that I might have called upon him to open his mind to me. The august image of truth hath ever been present to my mind. O holy truth! thou hast been the sole object of my veneration! If, in after ages, this work should still be read, it is my wish that, while my readers perceive how much I am

diverged from passions and prejudice, they should be ignorant of the kingdom which gave me birth, of the government under which I lived, of the profession I followed in my country, and of the religious faith I professed: it is my wish that they should only consider me as their fellow-citizen and their friend. The first duty that is incumbent upon us, the first care we ought to attend to, when we treat of things important to the happiness of mankind, is to expel from our minds every idea of hope or fear. Raised above all human considerations, it is then we soar above the atmosphere, and behold the globe beneath us. From thence it is, that we let fall our tears upon persecuted genius, upon talents neglected, and upon virtue in distress. From thence it is, that we pour forth imprecations on those who deceive mankind, and those who oppress them, and devote them to ignominy. From thence it is, that we see the proud head of the tyrant humbled and covered with dust; while the modest front of the just man reaches to the vault of the skies. From thence it is, that I have been enabled to cry out, I am free, and feel myself upon a level with the subject I treat. It is from thence, in a word, that, viewing those beautiful regions in which the arts and sciences flourish, and which have been for so long a time obscured by ignorance and barbarism, I have said to myself, who is it that hath digged these canals? Who is it that hath dried up these plains? Who is it that hath founded these cities? Who is it that hath collected, clothed, and civilized these people? Then have I heard the voice of all the enlightened men among them, who have answered, this is the effect of commerce.

Accordingly, those states that have been commercial, have civilized all the rest. The Phœnicians, whose extent of country and influence were extremely limited, acquired, by their genius for naval enterprises, an importance which ranked them foremost in the history of the ancient nations. They are mentioned by every historian. They were known to the most distant climes, and their fame has been transmitted to succeeding ages.

Situated on a barren coast, separated from the continent by the Mediterranean on the one side, and the



mountains of Libanus on the other, they seemed to have been destined by nature for the dominion of the sea. Fishing taught them the art of navigation, and furnished them with the purple dye, which they extracted from the murex; while the sea sand upon their shores, taught them to discover the secret of making glass. Happy in possessing so few natural advantages, since the want of these awakened that spirit of invention and industry, which is the parent of arts and opulence!

It must be confessed, that the situation of the Phœnicians was admirably adapted to extend their commerce to every part of the world. By dwelling, as it were, on the confines of Africa, Asia, and Europe, if they could not unite the inhabitants of the globe in one common interest, they at least had it in their power, by a commercial intercourse, to communicate to every nation the enjoyments of all climates. But the ancients, whom we have so often excelled, though we have derived much useful knowledge from them, had not means sufficient to enable them to establish an universal commerce. The Phœnicians had no shipping, except galleys; they only carried on a coasting trade, and their sailing was confined to the Mediterranean. Although this state was the model upon which other maritime powers were formed, it is not so easy to determine what it has, as what it might have performed. We may form a conjecture of the population of the Phœnicians by their colonies. It is said that their numbers extended along the coasts of the Mediterranean, and particularly on the shores of Africa.

Tyre or Sidon, the queen of the ocean, gave birth to Carthage. While the opulence of Tyre invited tyrants to rivet its fetters, Carthage, the offspring of Tyre, notwithstanding its riches, had this happy advantage over the parent state, that it enjoyed its liberty. It commanded the coasts of Africa, and had possession of Spain, which in those days was the richest country in Europe, and famous for gold and silver mines of its own, though destined, at the expence of so much bloodshed, to acquire others in the new world.

Had the Roman power never existed, Carthage would in all probability have been nothing more than a

commercial state ; but the ambition of one nation excited all the rest to relinquish the arts of commerce for those of war, and either to conquer or to perish. Carthage fell in the contest, because riches produce an opposite effect to poverty, since they extinguish courage and bring on a dislike to military exertions. The subversion of a republic which gloried in its industry, and owed its power to its skill in useful arts, was perhaps a misfortune to Europe, and to the world in general.

Greece, intersected everywhere by seas, must necessarily flourish by commerce. Its position in the Archipelago, and its distance from any large continent, seemed to make it unlikely that it should either conquer or be conquered. Situated between Asia and Europe, it contributed to civilize both the one and the other, and enjoyed a deserved share of prosperity, as the reward of its labours and services. Almost all the Greeks came either from Egypt or Phœnicia, and brought along with them the knowledge and industry of those countries ; but of all the Asiatic colonies, those were the most flourishing and happy that had a turn for commerce.

Athens employed her first ships either in carrying on a trade with Asia, or in planting as many colonies as Greece in her infancy might have received from thence : but these emigrations involved them in wars. The Persians, living under an arbitrary government would not even suffer any free people to settle on the confines of the sea ; and the satraps inculcated into the great king the doctrine of universal slavery. This was the source of all the wars in Asia Minor, where the Athenians found means to make all the insular and maritime states either their allies or their subjects. Athens enlarged her commerce by her victories, and her power by her commerce. All the arts made their appearance in Greece at the same time, together with the luxury of Asia.

Commerce, agriculture, and the means of population, were introduced into Sicily by the Greeks and the Carthaginians. Rome, who beheld their progress with a jealous eye, seized upon that island which was destined to supply it with subsistence ; and, having driven out the two nations that contended for the sovereignty of it, attacked first one, and then the other. From the moment that

Carthage was destroyed, Greece necessarily trembled for her fate. But it was Alexander who marked the way for the Romans; nor was it possible, perhaps that the Greeks could have been subdued by a foreign power, if they had not first conquered each other. Commerce is finally destroyed by the riches it accumulates, as power is by its own conquests; and when the commerce of the Greeks had failed in the Mediterranean, it no longer subsisted in any part of the known world.

The Greeks, by improving upon all the sciences and arts they had received from the Egyptians and Tyrians, elevated human reason to a high degree of perfection: but it has been reduced so low by the subsequent revolutions of empires, that in all probability it will never rise again to the same standard. Their admirable institutions were superior to the best we have at this day. The plan upon which they founded their colonies does honour to their humanity. As all the arts owed to them their rise and perfection, they did not survive the fate of their protectors. It is evident, from some works of Xenophon, that the Greeks were better acquainted with the principles of trade than most modern nations are at present.

If we consider that the Europeans have the advantage of all the knowledge of the Greeks; that their commerce is infinitely more extensive; that since the improvements in navigation their ideas are directed to greater and more various objects; it is astonishing that they should not have the most palpable superiority over them. But it must be observed, that when these people arrived at the knowledge of the arts and of trade, they were just produced, as it were, from the hands of Nature, and had all the powers necessary to improve the talents she had given them; whereas the European nations were subject to laws and institutions of an extravagant nature. In Greece the arts of trade met with men; in Europe, with slaves. Whenever the absurdities of our institutions have been pointed out, we have taken pains to correct them, without ever daring totally to overthrow the edifice. We have remedied some abuses, by introducing others; and, in our efforts to support, reform, and palliate, we have adopted more contradictions and absurdi-

ties in our manners, than are to be found among the most barbarous people.

The Romans, formed for conquest, though they dazzled the world with an appearance of grandeur, fell short of the Greeks in their improvements in philosophy and the arts, in their encouragement of industry, and their advancement of rational knowledge. They promoted an intercourse between different nations, not by uniting them by the ties of commerce, but by imposing upon them the same yoke of subordination. They ravaged the globe, which, when reduced to subjection, they left in a state rather of lethargy than tranquillity. Their despotism and military government oppressed the people, extinguished the powers of genius, and degraded the human race.

Constantine passed two laws, which, though Montequieu has not ventured to reckon them among the causes of the decline of the empire, threw every thing into still greater disorder. The first, dictated by imprudence and fanaticism, though it appeared to be the effect of humanity, affords a proof that great innovations are often attended with much danger; and that the original rights of mankind cannot always be made the standard of government. By this law, all slaves who should embrace christianity were allowed their freedom. Thus, while those who had hitherto dragged on a precarious existence were reinstated in their primitive rights, the state was weakened; because the proprietors of large tracts of land were deprived of the number of hands necessary for their improvement, and were for some time reduced to the most extreme indigence. On the other hand, the new converts, having no property themselves, or any certain means of subsistence, were not able to exert themselves in favour of the state, so as to repair the injury which the government had done to their masters. It is equally impossible that they should have had any attachment to a state which did not afford them subsistence, or to a religion which the irresistible desire of liberty alone had induced them to embrace. By another edict, paganism was prohibited throughout the whole empire; and these extensive dominions were thus inhabited by men, whose attachment to each other, and to the state, was

no longer secured by the solemn ties of religion, nor by the oaths of allegiance. Having no priests, no temples, no public morals, they had no motives to excite them to repel an enemy who should attack a government with which they were no longer connected.

Accordingly, the inhabitants of the north, when they rushed upon the empire, found every thing ready to favour their invasion. Harassed in Poland and in Germany by some nations which had migrated from Great Tartary, they took a temporary possession of certain provinces already ruined, till they were expelled by succeeding conquerors of a still more ferocious disposition than themselves. They were a succession of waves, pressing upon, and driving away, each other. When these barbarians determined to settle in the regions they had laid waste, they divided countries which the Romans had formerly united. From that moment all communication between those states, established by accident, necessity, or caprice, was at an end. The swarms of pirates that infested the seas, together with the fierce disposition of the inhabitants on the frontiers, discouraged every connection that mutual convenience might have rendered necessary. The subjects of every kingdom that had any kind of extent, were separated from each other by insurmountable obstacles; for the banditti, who infested the roads, converted a journey of any length into a dangerous expedition. The nations of Europe, thus plunged a second time, by slavery and despair, into that state of insensibility and indolence, which must for many ages have been the primary state of the human race, derived little advantage from the fertility of their soil; and their industry was exhausted in the employments of a savage life. Tracts of country, at no great distance, were to them of as little importance as if they had not existed; nor had they any further knowledge of their neighbours than as they happened to excite their fears or their enmity.

The accounts given by some writers of the wealth and splendour of the seventh century, are as fabulous as all the other miraculous things we read of in the history of those times. The clothing then in use was of skins and coarse woollen; the conveniences of life were not known.

Bold and solid edifices were indeed erected, which prove to what a degree of perfection an art may be carried, when it is the effect of the successive and continual efforts of the nation that invented it. But an architecture sprung up in the forests of the Druids, from an imitation of the trees, which, shooting up into the air, form very acute angled arches, and the branches of which bend down, and are interwoven with each other, was not calculated to convey an idea either of the affluence or taste of the age. Neither much money, nor much knowledge of the arts, is required to pile up heaps of stone by the hands of slaves. One incontestible proof of the indigence of the people was, that taxes were levied in kind; and that even the contributions, which the inferior clergy paid to their superiors, consisted of provisions.

The superstition that prevailed increased the general darkness. With sophisms and subtlety, it laid the foundations of a false science, with which it filled the minds of men, to the detriment of real knowledge. In the eighth, and the beginning of the ninth century, Rome, no longer the capital of the masters of the universe, attempted to exercise her authority as before, in deposing or making kings. Deprived of inhabitants and soldiers, by dint of opinions and religious tenets alone, she aspired to universal monarchy. By her management princes were excited to take up arms against each other, people against their kings, and kings against their people. All merit consisted in making war, and all virtue in obeying the church. The dignity of monarchs was degraded by the claims of Rome, which inspired a contempt for princes, without exciting the love of liberty. Literature was then comprised in a few absurd romances, and some melancholy tales, the offspring of cloistered indolence.

- This contributed to entertain that dejection of spirit, and that propensity to the marvellous, so favourable to the interests of superstition.

The face of the globe was again changed by two other nations. A people pouring in from Scandinavia, and the Cimbrian Chersonesus, spread themselves to the north of Europe, which on the southern side was harassed by the Arabs. The former were disciples of Wodin, the latter of Mohammed; men who had equally diffused

the fanaticism of conquest with that of religion. Charlemagne subdued one of these nations, and maintained his ground against the other. These inhabitants of the north, called Saxons or Normans, were indigent, ill-armed, and undisciplined, of savage manners, and driven to combat and to death by misery and superstition. Charlemagne was desirous of compelling them to change that religion which rendered them so terrible, for another which would dispose them to obedience. He was obliged to wade through seas of blood, and the cross was erected on heaps of slain. He was less successful against the Arabs, conquerors of Asia, Africa, and Spain; and could not gain a footing beyond the Pyrenean mountains.

The necessity of repulsing the Arabs, but especially the Normans, occasioned the revival of naval enterprises in Europe. Charlemagne in France, Alfred the Great in England, and some cities of Italy, built ships; and these first attempts towards navigation, revived for a short time maritime commerce. Charlemagne established great fairs, the principal of which was at Aix-la-Chapelle. This is the method of trading among people where commerce is still in its infancy.

The Arabs, in the mean time, laid the foundations of the most extensive commerce that had been known since the times of Athens and Carthage. It is true, this was not so much owing to the lights of cultivated reason, and to the progress of a good administration, as to the extent of their power, and the nature of the country they possessed. Masters of Spain, of Africa, of Asia Minor, of Persia, and part of India, they introduced reciprocal exchanges, from one region to another, of the commodities in different parts of their vast empire. They extended themselves gradually as far as the Moluccas and to China, sometimes as traders, sometimes as missionaries, frequently as conquerors.

Soon after this, the Venetians, Genoese, and Arabs of Barcelona, went to Alexandria to buy up the merchandize of Africa and India, and disposed of it in Europe. The Arabs, enriched by commerce, and sated with conquest, were no longer the same people who burnt the Alexandrian library. They cultivated the arts and polite literature; and were distinguished from other

conquering nations, by their improvements of the reason and industry of men. To them we owe the sciences of algebra and chemistry, new discoveries in astronomy, new improvements in mechanics and medicine, unknown to the ancients. But, among the fine arts, poetry is the only one they have cultivated with success.

At the same period the subjects of the Greek empire imitated the manufactures of Asia; and had, through various channels, monopolized the riches of India. But the advantages they derived from both these circumstances could not survive the fate of their empire, which had nothing to oppose to the heroic and daring enthusiasm of the Arabs, but the weak and unmanly weapons of scholastic logic, and the controversial armour of monks; who had gained such an ascendant, that the emperor used to ask God pardon for the time he employed in affairs of state. Painting and sculpture were no longer known; and it was matter of eternal dispute, whether images ought, or ought not, to be worshipped. The Greeks, surrounded by the ocean, and in possession of several islands, had yet no maritime force: they defended themselves against the naval power of Egypt, and of the Saracens, by wild-fire; the vain and precarious defence of a degenerate people. Constantinople, not being in a condition to protect her maritime trade at a distance, resigned it to the Genoese, who seized upon Caffa, which they made a flourishing city.

The nobility of Europe acquired a tincture of the manners of the Greeks and Arabs, in their ridiculous expeditions of the crusades. They grew acquainted with their arts and their luxury, which afterwards became objects of necessity to them. The Venetians had a more extensive demand for the goods they brought from the east; and the Arabs themselves carried some of them into France, England, and even into Germany.

These powers had at that period neither shipping nor manufactures: they laid restraints upon commerce, and the character of a merchant was in no degree of estimation. This useful set of men were never respected among the Romans. They treated their merchants with as much contempt as their players, courtezans, bastards.



slaves, and gladiators. The political system, established throughout Europe by the power and ignorance of the northern nations, must necessarily have confirmed a prejudice which owed its rise to a barbarous pride. Our ancestors had the absurdity to adopt, as the basis of their government, a principle destructive of all society; a contempt for useful labour. The only persons in any degree of estimation, were the lords of manors, or such as had distinguished themselves in battle. The nobles, it is well known, were so many petty sovereigns, who abused their own power, and opposed that of the monarch. The barons were fond of parade, avaricious, whimsical, and poor. Sometimes they invited the merchants into their little states, and at others extorted money from them. In these barbarous times were established the several duties of tolls, of export and import, of passage, of quarters, of escheat, and other oppressions without number. All the bridges and highways were opened, or stopped up, at the will of the prince or his vassals. The first elements of commerce were so totally unknown that it was customary to fix the price of commodities.

The merchants were often pillaged, and always ill paid by the knights and barons. Trade was carried on in caravans or companies, which went armed to the places where the fairs were kept. At these marts, the merchants omitted nothing that might engage the favour of the people. They were generally accompanied by jugglers, musicians, and buffoons. As there were then no large towns, and that neither public spectacles and meetings, nor the sedentary pleasures of private society, were known, the fair time was the season for diversions, which, degenerating into dissoluteness, gave a sanction to the invectives and severities of the clergy. The traders were frequently excommunicated. The people held those strangers in abhorrence who supplied their tyrants with superfluities, and associated with men whose manners were so repugnant to their prejudices and rude austerity of life. The Jews, who soon engaged in all the branches of commerce, did not bring it into much repute. They were then considered in the same light throughout all Europe, as they are at this day in Poland and Turkey. As their fortunes were increasing every

day, they were enabled to advance money to merchants and tradesmen; for which they demanded interest equivalent to the risque they ran in vesting their capital in other hands. The schoolmen were violent in opposing this necessary measure, which their rude prejudices had taught them to condemn. This theological determination of a point of a civil and political nature, was attended with singular consequences. The magistrates, blinded by an authority, against even the unjust exercise of which no one dared to appeal, denounced sentence of confiscation, and ignominious penalties, against usury; which, in those dark ages, the laws did not distinguish from the most moderate interest. It was at this juncture, that, to make themselves amends for the dangers and mortifications they were exposed to, in carrying on a commerce which was looked upon as odious and unlawful, the Jews abandoned themselves to the most excessive rapacity. They were obliged to add to the price of money, which may be estimated by the wants of the person who borrows, by the credit of him who lends, and by a number of other circumstances, the price of infamy, which is either of little value, or for which there can be no compensation. They became objects of universal detestation. Persecuted, pillaged, and proscribed, they invented bills of exchange, which secured the remains of their fortunes. The clergy declared the exchange usurious; but it was of too great utility to be abolished. One of the effects it produced, was, to make the merchants more independent of the prince, who treated them better, apprehending that they might transport their riches into other countries.

The Italians, who are better known by the name of Lombards, were the first who took advantage of this early change of ideas. They formed small communities, and procured the protection of some states, who, on their account, dispensed with the laws against strangers, which had been made in the barbarous ages. By virtue of this indulgence, they became agents for all the southern parts of Europe.

The inhabitants of the north began likewise to awake from their lethargy; but their recovery was later, and effected with greater difficulty. Hamburgh and Lubeck,

having attempted to open a trade in the Baltic, were obliged to unite for their mutual defence against the pirates who infested those latitudes. The success of this little combination encouraged other towns to enter into the confederacy; in a short time, this was composed of fourscore cities, which had either obtained or purchased the privilege of being governed by their own laws, and formed a line of communication from the Baltic to the Rhine. This association, which was the first modern one that adopted a regular system of commerce, supplied the Lombards with naval stores and other merchandize of the north, in exchange for the produce of Asia, Italy, and other southern countries.

Flanders was the scene of these fortunate transactions; but it was not to its situation alone that it owed a distinction so favourable to its interests: this must likewise be attributed to its numerous manufactures of fine cloth, and particularly of tapestry; which last affords a proof how little the arts of drawing and perspective were then known. By these advantageous circumstances, the Low Countries became the richest, the most populous, and the best cultivated part of Europe.

The flourishing condition of the inhabitants of Flanders, the Hanse towns, and some republics, who owed their prosperity to their freedom, engaged the attention of most of the reigning monarchs, in whose dominions the right of citizens had hitherto been confined to the nobility and clergy; the rest of their subjects were slaves. But as soon as the cities were declared free, and had large immunities granted them, the merchants and mechanics entered into associations, which rose in estimation as they acquired riches. The sovereigns opposed these associations to the barons. Thus anarchy and feudal tyranny gradually decreased. The tradesmen became citizens, and the third order of the state was restored to the privilege of being admitted to the national assembly.

Montesquieu attributes to christianity the honour of having abolished slavery; but we venture to differ from him. When industry and riches prevailed among the people, the princes began to hold them in some estimation; when the sovereign could avail himself of the riches of the people, to gain advantages over the barons, laws were

framed to put the people in a better condition. It was through that sound policy, which commerce always introduces, and not through the spirit of the christian religion, that kings were induced to bestow freedom upon the slaves of their vassals, because those slaves, when made free, became subjects. Pope Alexander III, it is true, declared that christians were to be exempt from servitude; but this declaration was made merely to please the kings of France and England, who were desirous of humbling their vassals. Had he been inspired by the love of justice and humanity, he would not have said that the christian alone, but that man in general, was not born for slavery. He would have said, that the person, who is a voluntary slave, is a coward; that there are no lawful chains to bind an unwilling slave; that he, who is not able to break these chains by force, is innocent in delivering himself from them by flight; and that his pretended master is an assassin, if he should punish with death an action to which nature gives a sanction. But the christian religion of the church of Rome is so far from prohibiting slavery, that, in the catholic countries of Germany, as in Bohemia and Poland, where the people are extremely bigotted to that communion, they are still slaves; and the ecclesiastical jurisdictions in these parts have still their bondsmen, as they formerly had in France, without incurring the censure of the church.

In Italy, one might perceive the dawn of more prosperous days. The republics of Pisa, Genoa, and Florence, were established on the wisest principles: the factions of the Guelphs and Gibbelines, which had for so many ages laid waste these delightful countries, were at length appeased: trade flourished, and consequently learning would soon be introduced. Venice was in the height of its glory; its navy, which eclipsed that of its neighbours, checked the progress of the maritime power of the Mamelucs and the Turks; in commerce, it was superior to all the European states taken together; its inhabitants were numerous, and its riches immense; the revenues were well managed, and the people were content; the republic borrowed money of the richer subjects, from motives, not of necessity, but of policy. The Venetians were the first people who found out the secret of attach-

ing rich individuals to the interest of government, by inviting them to vest some part of their fortune in the public funds. At Venice, there were manufactures of silk, gold, and silver; it supplied foreigners with ships: its works in gold and silver were the best, and almost the only ones of that time. The inhabitants were even accused of extravagance in having gold and silver plate, and other utensils of the same materials. They were not, however, without sumptuary laws; but these laid no restraint on a species of luxury, by which the sums expended were preserved to the state. The noblemen united economy with splendour; the opulence of Venice revived the architecture of Athens; and, upon the whole, there was magnificence as well as elegance in their luxury: the people were ignorant, but the nobles were enlightened: the government opposed the attempts of the popes with firmness and prudence. *Siamo Veneziani, poi Cristiani*, said one of their senators, who expressed in these words the sense of the whole senate; for at that early period they debased the priesthood, though they should rather have made it useful to morality; which, however, was more rigid and pure among the Venetians than among the other people of Italy. Their troops were very different from those miserable *condottieri* whose name was so much more terrible than their arms. Venice was the seat of politeness; and society was then under less restraint from state inquisitors, than it has been since the republic began to be jealous of the power of its neighbours and dissident of its own strength.

In the fifteenth century, Italy far surpassed the other states of Europe. The most extravagant and most persecuting spirit of superstition, which supplied the place of every kind of merit, and occasioned so many secret artifices and cruel oppressions, was, however, the means of releasing Spain gradually from the Arabian yoke; its several provinces had lately been united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the conquest of Granada; and its power was even equal to that of France. The fine wool of Castile and Leon was prepared at Segovia, and the cloths manufactured from it, were sold all over Europe, and even in Asia. The perpetual efforts the Spaniards were obliged to make to preserve their liberty,

inspired them with resolution and confidence ; their success had elevated their minds ; and, being unenlightened, they abandoned themselves to all the enthusiasm of chivalry and religion. Confined to a peninsula, and having no immediate intercourse with other nations, they despised them ; and displayed that sort of proud disdain, which, either among individuals or communities, is usually the characteristic of ignorance. They were the only people that maintained a standing body of infantry, which was excellent. Having been for many ages involved in war, their soldiery was indisputably superior to that of the other states of Europe.

The Portuguese were nearly of the same kind of turn ; but their monarchy was better regulated than that of Castile, and the administration was conducted with more ease after the reduction of the Moors by the conquest of Algarva.

In France, Lewis XI had just lowered the power of the great vassals, raised that of the magistracy, and made the nobles subservient to the laws. The people of France, growing less dependent on their lords, must necessarily become, in a short time, more industrious, more active, and more respectable ; but industry and commerce could not flourish on a sudden. Reason must of course make but a slow progress in the midst of those commotions which were still excited by the great, and under the reign of a prince devoted to the most abominable superstition. The barons were distinguished only by their savage pomp ; their revenues were scarce sufficient to entertain in their suit a train of gentlemen without employment, who defended them against the sovereign and the laws. The expences of their table were immoderate ; and this barbarous luxury, of which there are still too many remains, afforded no encouragement to any of the useful arts. But neither the manners nor the language of those times partook of that decency which distinguishes the superior ranks of citizens, and procures them respect from the rest. Notwithstanding the courtesy enjoined to the knights, coarse and rough manners still prevailed among the great ; the nation had then the same character of inconsistency it has since preserved, and which a nation will ever have, whose morals and customs are not conformable to the laws. The

councils issued innumerable, and frequently contradictory edicts; but the prince readily dispensed with the observance of them. By this easy disposition of the sovereign, the inconveniencies which would have arisen from a multitude of laws inconsiderately made by the French ministry, have been happily prevented.

England, less opulent, and less industrious than France, was composed of insolent barons, despotic bishops, and a people who were tired of their yoke; a certain restless disposition prevailed in the nation, which must necessarily, sooner or later, lead them on to liberty. This character owed its rise to the absurd tyranny of William the Conqueror, and the cruel disposition of several of his successors. The intolerable abuse of power had made the English extremely jealous of their sovereigns; the very name of king carried with it the idea of terror; and these sentiments, transmitted from father to son, afterwards laid the foundation of that form of government they now have the happiness to enjoy. The long contention between the houses of York and Lancaster, while it raised a martial spirit and an impatience of slavery, involved the nation, at the same time, in poverty and confusion. The English wool was then manufactured in Flanders, and was exported, as well as its lead and tin, in vessels belonging to the Hanse towns. The principles of navigation, of internal policy, jurisprudence, luxury, and the fine arts, were entirely unknown in England; at the same time that it was overburdened with a multitude of rich convents and hospitals. These convents were the usual resort of the distressed nobles, as the hospitals were of the common people; idleness and barbarous manners were encouraged by these superstitious institutions.

Germany, which had long been agitated by quarrels between the emperors and the popes, and by intestine wars, had at this time begun to enjoy a state of tranquillity. Order had taken place of anarchy, and the inhabitants of this extensive country, who, though strangers to wealth and commerce, were versed in the arts of war and agriculture, had nothing to fear from their neighbours, neither could they be formidable to them. The feudal system, so fatal to mankind in other countries, here assumed a milder aspect; the princes presiding over this

large portion of the European continent, generally speaking, governed their respective states with a degree of moderation ; they seldom abused their authority, and if the peaceable possession of their inheritance could compensate the want of liberty, the Germans were happy ; commerce and industry were entirely confined to the free cities, and to the towns included in the Hanseatic league ; the mines of Hanover and Saxony were not yet discovered ; money was scarce ; the farmer sold a few horses to strangers, nor had the princes yet introduced the traffic of the human species ; the expences of the table, and a variety of equipages, were the only articles of luxury ; the nobles and the clergy intoxicated themselves, without disturbing the government ; it was with some difficulty that the gentry were dissuaded from amusing themselves with robbing on the highways ; their manners were savage, and, during the two succeeding centuries, the German troops were more distinguished by their cruelties than by their discipline and bravery.

The northern countries had made less progress than Germany. Oppressed by the nobles and priests, the inhabitants no longer retained that enthusiastic love of glory with which the religion of Wodin had formerly inspired them ; nor were they yet acquainted with those wise institutions which some of them have since borrowed from better forms of government. Their power was so inconsiderable, that a single Hanse town was capable of intimidating the three potentates of the north. They recovered their national importance after the reformation, and under the auspices of Frederick and Gustavus Vasa.

The Turks were strangers to the science of government : they had no knowledge of the arts, nor taste for commerce : but the Janissaries were the best troops in the world ; and there wanted but one single verse to be added to the Koran, to make those people, over whom religion has hitherto had so much influence, become the masters of the world. If Mohammed, after having said, " thou shalt return to the enemy the month of calamity " for the month of calamity," had added, " and thou shalt despise the vain knowledge of the stranger ; the art of war is the only one thou shalt learn from him ;" the freedom of Europe would then have been at an end.



Whoever shall teach the perfection of the military art to the Turks, will be the common enemy of all nations. The Janissaries, those attendants of a despot whom they keep in awe, or to whom they ensure respect; whom they fix upon the throne, or strangle at pleasure; had at that time some great men for their leaders. They subverted the empire of the Greeks, who were infatuated with theology, and stupified by superstition. Some of the inhabitants of this mild climate, who cultivated literature and the arts, abandoned their subjugated country, and took refuge in Italy; whither they were followed by manufacturers and traders. Competency, peace, prosperity, the ambition of excelling in every accomplishment, and the desire of new pleasures, which is inspired by good governments, favoured the revival of letters in the country of the ancient Romans; and the Greeks brought to the Italians a better knowledge of good models, and a taste for antiquity. The art of printing was invented; and though for a long time the discovery was of little use, while the people continued in a state of poverty and indolence, yet, when commerce and the arts had made some progress, it diffused the knowledge of books. A love of study prevailed, and the ancients were universally admired: but they had no rivals except in Italy.

Rome, which in every age has almost always assumed a character the best adapted to the present moment, seemed disposed no longer to encourage that ignorance which had so long and so materially been subservient to her interests. She protected polite literature, and such of the arts as depended more on imagination than reason. The most ignorant priest is well aware, that representations of a terrible divinity, mortification, self-denial, austerity, melancholy, and terror, are so many expedients to gain an ascendant over the minds of men, by engaging them deeply in religious matters. But there are times when these expedients have but little effect. Men who have grown rich in peaceful states, are fond of enjoying themselves; they dislike the dull road of life, and are eager in their pursuit of pleasures: When fairs began to be established, with entertainments of sports, dancing, and other recreations, the clergy, who observed that the love of festivity made the people less religious, prohibited these

sports, and excommunicated those who bore a part in them. But finding that no regard was paid to their censures, they changed their plan, and determined to take these amusements into their own hands. Such was the origin of sacred comedy. The death of St. Catharine, acted by the monks of St. Denys, rivalled the success of the players. Music was introduced into the churches; and even farces were exhibited there. The festivals called *la Fête des Foux et de l'Ane, et des Innocens*, proved as entertaining to the people, as the farces that were acted in the public places. It often happened that, attracted by the mere love of amusement, they left the dances of the gypsies, to join in the procession for the festival of St. John. As the Italians improved in politeness, their pleasures became more refined; and the decency that was introduced into their common feasts and public entertainments, afforded less pretence for the censures of the priests, and procured them a toleration. The merit of being able to read had been long confined to this class of men; but when it became a more general accomplishment, they could no longer avail themselves of this distinction; and finding that learning was the road to fame, they were ambitious of shining in literary pursuits. The popes, who enjoyed an opulent and peaceful sovereignty in the voluptuous region of Italy, laid aside their austerity. Their court became an agreeable one. The cultivation of literature was considered as a new expedient to establish their authority over the minds of men. Genius was cherished, and marks of honour were conferred upon great artists. Raphael died but a short time before he was to have been created a cardinal; and Petrarch had the honours of a triumph. As little conformable as this good taste, and these new amusements, may appear to the spirit of the gospel, they were evidently calculated to promote the interest of the papal throne. The fine arts and learning serve to ornament this ecclesiastical structure; but philosophy demolishes it. Thus, while the church of Rome favoured polite literature and the fine arts, it discountenanced the more accurate sciences. Poets were crowned with laurels; but philosophers were persecuted. Galileo from his prison might have beheld Tasso car-

ried in triumph to the capitol, if those men of great genius had been cotemporaries.

It was now time that philosophy and learning should lend their support to morality and reason. The church of Rome had taken all imaginable pains to subvert those principles of justice which nature had implanted in all mankind. The single maxim, that the pope had a right to the sovereignty of all empires, sapped the foundation of all society and public virtue: this maxim, however, had for a long time prevailed, together with that horrid doctrine, which not only permitted, but enjoined hatred and persecution towards all whose religious opinions were not agreeable to those of the Romish church. Indulgences, a species of expiation which might be purchased for all crimes, or if any thing can be still more monstrous, for crimes to be committed in future; dispensations for breaking faith with the enemies of the pontiff, though they were of the same religion; that article of belief which teaches, that the merit of the just may be transferred to the wicked; vices of all kinds exemplified in the lives of the popes, and other religious persons, who ought to have set examples to the people; above all, that greatest reproach to humanity, the inquisition: all these horrid enormities made Europe appear to be rather the haunt of tygers and serpents, than a vast country inhabited or cultivated by men.

Such was the state of Europe, when the Portuguese monarch, at the head of an active, generous, and intelligent people, surrounded by neighbours who still preyed upon each other, formed a plan of extending his dominions by sea and land.

*First voyages of the Portuguese into those seas where it was supposed the island of Atalantis formerly was.*

It was an opinion generally prevailing, that it was impossible to sail across the Atlantic ocean; and that the western coasts of Africa, scorched by the torrid zone, were uninhabitable. This prejudice might have been removed, by consulting some writings of antiquity, which had been saved from the destructive hand of time, and the devastations of ignorance: but men at that period were not sufficiently conversant with

these learned works, to discover truths in them which are not very distinctly spoken of. Our information upon these important objects, was to proceed from the Moors and the Arabs, who had already communicated so much knowledge to Europe. These people, sailing across a sea that was deemed impracticable, drew immense riches from a country supposed to be on fire. Some expeditions, undertaken to Barbary, brought the source of their good fortune to light; and it was resolved to go in search of it. This project was formed by adventurers of all nations; but Henry, son of John I, king of Portugal, was the only who adopted wise measures in the pursuit of it.

This prince availed himself of the little knowledge which was preserved among the Arabs. At Sagrés, a city of Algarva, an observatory was established by his orders, where the young noblemen composing his court were instructed. He had a considerable share in the invention of the astrolabe, and was the first who was sensible of the advantages that might be drawn from the compass, which, though already known in Europe, had never been applied to the purposes of navigation.

The pilots who studied under his direction, in the year 1419 discovered Madeira, which some learned men have considered as the poor remains of the island anciently called Atalantis. But it is a question, whether there ever was such an island; and if so, what was its situation and extent? These are points upon which we may form our opinion, according to the degree of confidence we place in Diodorus Siculus and Plato, and according to the manner in which we interpret what they say upon the subject. "After having gone over the islands in the neighbourhood of the pillars of Hercules," says the first of these writers, "we proceed to speak of those which are further advanced in the ocean, going towards the west. In the sea bordering upon Lybia, there is one very famous island, at the distance of several days sail from the continent."

Diodorus then enlarges upon the population, manners, laws, fertility, and remarkable things, of this island; after which, he continues thus:

"In the most remote times of antiquity, this island was discovered by the Phœnicians. They passed the

“ pillars of Hercules, and sailed into the ocean. Near  
 “ these pillars they founded Gadeira, or Cadix. They  
 “ had sailed through the seas beyond the pillars, and  
 “ along the coast of Lybia, when they were overtaken  
 “ by a violent storm, which threw them out at sea into  
 “ the main ocean. After having experienced several days  
 “ of bad weather, they arrived at the afore-mentioned  
 “ island. They published an account of this voyage, and  
 “ formed the project of a settlement in this new country ;  
 “ but the Carthaginians opposed it, apprehending that  
 “ it would depopulate their country.”

Let us now consider what is become of this island, which is no longer to be found. We may, perhaps, learn this from Plato.

In his dialogue intitled *Timæus* Critias addresses himself to Socrates in the following terms : “ Solon was the  
 “ intimate friend of Dropidas, our ancestor. Dropidas  
 “ regretted much, that public affairs had diverted Solon  
 “ from the turn he had for poetry, and had prevented  
 “ him from finishing his poem upon the Atalantis. He  
 “ had brought the subject of it with him from his voyage  
 “ into Egypt. Solon used to say, that the inhabitants  
 “ of Sais, a city situated at the point of the Delta,  
 “ at the place where the Nile divides itself into two  
 “ branches, thought themselves to be sprung from the  
 “ Athenians, whose lance, sword, buckler, and other  
 “ arms, they had preserved among them. To this opi-  
 “ nion prevailed in the island, he attributes the honours  
 “ he received from the inhabitants : there it was, that this  
 “ legislator, poet, and philosopher, conversing with the  
 “ priests, and entertaining them with accounts of Pro-  
 “ metheus, the first of mankind, of Niobe, of the de-  
 “ luge of Deucalion, and other similar traditions, one of  
 “ the priests exclaimed, ‘ O Solon, Solon ! you Greeks  
 “ are still in a state of infancy ; there is not a single old  
 “ man amongst you. You mistake emblematical fables for  
 “ facts. You have no knowledge but of one deluge ;  
 “ which, however, has been preceded by many others.  
 “ It is a long time since Athens hath existed. It is a  
 “ a long time that it hath been civilized. It is a long  
 “ time that its name hath been famous in Egypt, on ac-  
 “ count of exploits of which you are ignorant ; and the

“ history of which is consigned in our archives. There  
“ it is, that you may inform yourself of the antiquities  
“ of your city.”

The priest, after having explained, in a very sensible and beautiful manner, the causes of the ignorance of the Greeks, proceeds in the following manner:

“ There it is, that you will learn how gloriously the  
“ Athenians, in ancient times, subdued a formidable  
“ power that had dispersed itself in Europe and Asia, by  
“ a sudden irruption of warriors issuing from the midst of  
“ the Atlantic ocean. A considerable extent of land,  
“ situated opposite to the mouth of the strait called the  
“ Pillars of Hercules, was surrounded by this sea. It  
“ was a region more extensive than Asia and Lybia taken  
“ together. Between this country and the strait, there  
“ was a number of other smaller islands.

“ The country of which I have been speaking to you,  
“ or the island Atalantis, was governed by confede-  
“ rate sovereigns. In an expedition of theirs, they seiz-  
“ ed upon Lybia, as far as Egypt, on one side; and on  
“ the other, upon all the countries as far as Tyrrhenia.  
“ We were all slaves; and your ancestors were the per-  
“ sons who recovered our liberty. They led their fleets  
“ against the inhabitants of this island, and defeated them.  
“ But a greater misfortune than this still awaited them.  
“ A short time after, their whole island was sunk; and  
“ this territory, more extensive than Europe and Asia  
“ taken together, disappeared in an instant.”

What a fund for reflection doth not this quotation afford us? A heap of moving sands is the spot upon which man reposes, or exerts his faculties: he rushes, by his projects, into eternity; while a concurrence of fatal causes may unfold itself in an instant, and annihilate him, together with the superb edifices he hath erected.

One circumstance that contributes to strengthen the two preceding testimonies, is, that the sea which at this day bears the name of Atlantic, is not of any considerable depth; and that, at a great distance from its shores, we find the varec, and other marine substances, which indicate the existence of an ancient continent.

*Discovery of Ma-*  
*deira.—Present*  
*state of the island.*

BUT whether this country were real or imaginary, still there is a tradition which has gained much credit, that, at the arrival of the Portuguese, the island of Madeira was covered with forests; that these were set on fire; that they continued burning during the whole course of seven years; and that, at the end of that period, the soil was found to be of an extraordinary fertility. According to the calculation of the year 1768, the Portuguese have formed upon this territory, which is five and twenty miles in length, and ten in breadth, a population of sixty-three thousand nine hundred and thirteen souls, of all ages, and of both sexes; which are distributed in forty-three parishes, and seven small towns, beside the town of Funchal, built with no great share of taste, upon the southern coast, in a fertile valley, and at the foot of some mountains, the gentle slope of which is covered with gardens and very agreeable villas. The city is traversed by seven or eight rivulets, more or less considerable. Its road; which is the only spot where it is allowed to load and unload ships, and, consequently, the only one where the customs are settled, is very safe during most of the year. When it happens, which is very seldom, that the winds blow from between the south-east and the west-north-west quarter, passing by the south, it is necessary to go out of this road; but it is a fortunate circumstance, that the bad weather may be foreseen four and twenty hours previous to its coming on.

The gaps in the mountains, the blackish colour of the stones, and the lava mixed with the soil, are all so many indications of an ancient volcano on this spot. Accordingly, there is very little corn gathered here; and the inhabitants are obliged to draw from foreign parts three-fourths of what they consume.

The vineyards are the only resource of the inhabitants. They occupy the declivity of several mountains, the summits of which are planted with chestnut trees. Rows of pomegranate, orange, lemon, myrtle, and wild rose trees, fill up the intermediate space. The grapes usually grow under bowers, and ripen in the shade. The trees which produce them, are watered by numberless rivulets, which, issuing from the heights, do not lose themselves in the

plains, till after they have gone through an infinite number of windings among the plantations. Some of the proprietors have acquired or usurped the right of turning these streams constantly to their advantage; others have them only once, twice, or thrice in a week. Those even who want to plant a new vineyard under a burning climate, and in a dry soil, where watering is indispensably necessary, cannot partake of this privilege, without purchasing it at a very high price.

The produce of the vines is always divided into ten shares: one belongs to the king, another to the clergy, four parts to the proprietor, and as many to the cultivator.

The island brings forth several sorts of wine. The best and scarcest sort is drawn from a plant brought originally from Candia. It has a delicious kind of sweetness, is known by the name of Malmsey Madeira, and is sold for one hundred pistoles [41l. 13s. 4d. at 8s. 4d. the pistole] the pipe. The Madeira, which is dry, does not cost more than six or seven hundred livres [from 25l. to 29l. and upwards]; and the principal vent for it is in England. The wines of an inferior quality, and the pipe of which does not exceed four or five hundred livres [from 16l. to 20l. and upwards], are destined for the East Indies, for certain islands, and for the continent of North America.

The vintages commonly yield about thirty thousand pipes. Thirteen or fourteen thousand of the best wines are dispersed in different parts of the globe: the rest is consumed in the country, or changed into vinegar and brandy, for the consumption of the Brazils.

The public revenue here is raised by tithes generally laid upon all productions; by a tax of 10 *per cent.* upon every article of import, and 12 *per cent.* upon every article of export. These objects, taken together, yield a revenue of 2,700,000 livres [112,500l.] Such, however, are the vices of administration, that scarce any part of this considerable sum returns to the mother country.

The colony is governed by a chief, whose dominion extends likewise over Porto-Santo, in which there are no more than seven hundred inhabitants, and some vineyards; over the salvages, which are still less profitable; and over some other small islands, which are entirely uninhabited,



except in fishing seasons. For the defence of this important settlement, the governor is allowed no more than one hundred regular troops; but he has three thousand militia at his disposal, who are assembled and exercised for one month in every year. The whole of this corps, both officers and private men, serve without pay; nor are the posts less solicited for on that account. They entitle those who obtain them to some distinctions of rank, of which people are more eager in this island, than in any other part of the world.

*Voyages of the Portuguese to the continent of Africa.*

AFTER the discovery of Madeira, the Portuguese directed their flag towards the western parts of Africa. It has generally been thought, that they were the first Europeans who landed on these barbarous coasts. It appears, however, that the Normans had been there more than a century before them; and that these navigators, whose expeditions are but too little known, had formed some trifling settlements there, which had subsisted till the year 1410. At this period, the calamities in which France was involved, withdrew the attention of these people from advantages obtained at so great a distance.

The first expeditions of the Portuguese into Guinea were nothing more than piracies. These bold and cruel navigators, clothed in steel, and armed with thunder, snatched from the hands of a people who were astonished, divided, and dastardly, the benefits that nature or chance had bestowed upon them. Rapine, carried to so monstrous an excess, was at length put an end to; and this was when the people came to understand each other. Then it was that trade succeeded to plunder; and some exchanges were made, which, however, were seldom conducted with entire freedom, or founded on strict justice. At length, the court of Lisbon thought that its interest, as well as its glory, was concerned, in subjecting those that were supposed to be the most fertile parts of this extensive region to its own empire; and the execution of this project, more brilliant, perhaps, than it was wise, met with few obstacles. In order to give a degree of stability to these conquests, it was judged necessary to mul-

tiply fortresses, to diffuse the religion of Europe throughout the country, and to keep the natives in perpetual ignorance.

In the reign of John II, an intelligent prince, who first declared Lisbon a free port, and under whose auspices a new method was adopted of applying astronomy to navigation, the Portuguese doubled the Cape, which is at the extremity of Africa. It was then called the Cape of Storms: but the prince, who forelaw that it would open a passage to India, gave it the name of the Cape of Good Hope.

EMANUEL pursued the plan marked out by his predecessors. On the 18th of July 1497, he sent out a fleet, consisting of four ships, and gave the command of it to *Vasco de Gama*. This admiral, having weathered several storms in his cruise along the eastern coasts of Africa, and attempted seas before unknown, landed at length in Indostan, after a voyage of thirteen months.

ASIA, of which Indostan is one of the richest parts, is a vast continent, lying, according to the observations of the Russians, the truth of which has been justly doubted, between the 43d and the 207th degree of longitude. It extends, in a direction from one pole to the other, from the 77th degree of northern, to the 10th degree of southern latitude. That part of this large continent which is situated in the temperate zone, between the 35th and 50th degree of latitude, appears to be higher than the rest. It is bordered, both towards the north and south, by two vast chains of mountains, which run almost from the western extremity of Asia Minor and the coasts of the Black sea, to the ocean that washes the coasts of China and Tartary towards the east. These two chains are united by other intermediate chains, in a direction from south to north: they branch out towards the Northern, the Indian, and Eastern oceans, and appear like so many bulwarks raised between the beds of the large rivers which roll through these immense regions.

Such is the great basis which nature has raised to sup-

port the fabric of Asia. In the inland parts of this vast country, the earth is nothing more than a moveable sand, yielding to the impulse of the winds; there is not the least appearance either of calcareous stone or marble; no petrified shells, or other fossils, are to be found; the beds of minerals lie upon the surface. All these phenomena, joined to the observations made with the barometer, are proofs of the great elevation of this central part of Asia, to which the moderns have given the name of the Little Bucharía.

From these heights, which form a kind of girdle, surrounding this immense and unfruitful region, several large streams arise, that run in different channels. The fragments of barren earth, which are perpetually carried down by these rivers towards the several extremities of Asia, form so many barriers against the sea, and promise a stability and duration to this continent, superior to that of any other. Perhaps it will be its fate to see the rest repeatedly buried under the waters, before it suffers any encroachment itself.

The Caspian sea alone has preserved its station within the limits of this vast tract of land, which has been emerging from the deep through a series of ages. It is evidently the reservoir of those large rivers that fall into it. Some philosophers have imagined, but without any foundation, that it communicated with the ocean and the Black sea, by subterraneous passages. Against such conjectures it may be urged, that the evaporation would be sufficient to carry off the water as fast as it was conveyed there by the rivers; and that these subterraneous passages might easily be obstructed by the mud and sand which the waters would carry along with them. It is for this reason, also, that the Caspian sea is salt, as all the lakes are which receive the waters of rivers without pouring them out again. It appears certain, from the observations made with the barometer at Astracan, that the surface of the Caspian is below the level of the two neighbouring seas; consequently, it is equally probable that it should communicate with those seas by overflowings from their surface, as that it should furnish them with water by means of subterraneous canals.

The Frozen ocean, which extends along the northern

coasts of Siberia, renders them inaccessible, if we may believe the accounts given by the Russians. They tell us, that it is in vain to expect to find a new passage by this sea from Europe to America; and that the ice will always prevent the doubling of the Cape of Schalaginskoi, which separates the old from the new world, though this passage has once been crossed. But the Russians are probably not sincere enough, or not sufficiently informed, to deserve entire credit; and either tell us more or less than the truth.

The Indian ocean, which bears towards the south of Asia, is divided from the Great South sea by a chain of mountains, which begins at the island of Madagascar, and extending under water as far as Sumatra (as is evident from the shallows and rocks which are scattered in those parts), unites again at Van Diemen's Land and New Guinea. M. Buache, a geographer, who has examined the earth as a natural philosopher, and has laid down a chart of the world according to this hypothesis, is of opinion, that the sea between this long chain of islands and the southern coasts of Asia, should be divided into three great basons; the limits of which seem to have been circumscribed or drawn by the hand of nature.

The first, lying towards the west, between Arabia and Persia, is bounded to the south by that chain of islands which extends from Cape Comorin and the Maldivia islands to Madagascar. This bason, which runs into the land, is incessantly enlarging the Gulf of Persia and the Red sea. The second of these basons forms the Gulf of Bengal. The third includes the Great Archipelago, which contains the Sunda, the Moluccas, and the Philippine islands. This joins Asia to the southern continent, which serves as a kind of support to the Pacific ocean. Between this sea and the Great Archipelago, a kind of new bason is formed by a chain of mountains under water towards the east, which extends from the Ladrone to the Japan islands. When we have passed these celebrated islands, we come to a chain of islands, called the Kuriles, which touch the southern point of the peninsula of Kamtschatka, and form a fifth bason, into which the river Amur empties itself; but as its entrance is obstruct-

ed by the bamboos, which grow there in great abundance, it is imagined that this sea has very little depth.

These geographical details, far from being foreign to our purpose, are in a manner necessary to direct and engage our attention to the richest and finest continent upon the globe. We will begin with Indostan.

*Natural history*      *THOUGH* by the general name of the *East Indies* is commonly understood that immense tract of land which lies beyond the Arabian sea and the Persian empire, yet by *Indostan* is properly meant a country lying between two celebrated rivers, the Indus and the Ganges, which fall into the Indian ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from each other. A ridge of high mountains runs across this long tract from north to south, and, dividing it into two equal parts, extends as far as Cape Comorin, where it forms the boundary between the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel.

It is a remarkable circumstance, and perhaps the only one of the kind, that this ridge seems to be a barrier, erected by nature, to separate one season from another. The mere breadth of these mountains divides summer from winter, that is to say, the season of fine weather from that of rain; for it is well known there is no winter between the tropics: all that is meant by winter in India is that time of the year when the clouds, which the sun attracts from the sea, are driven violently by the winds against the mountains, where they break and dissolve in rain, accompanied with frequent storms. From hence, torrents are formed, which rush from the hills, swell the rivers, and overflow the valleys; dark vapours, that obscure the day, and spread a thick and impenetrable gloom over the deluged country: but, as the chaos which brooded over the principles of things before the creation, this cloudy season promotes fertility; for at this time the plants and flowers appear in full strength and beauty, and the fruits, in general, come to maturity.

The summer may naturally be expected to preserve its usual temperature better than the winter, in a climate so immediately under the influence of the sun: the sky, without a cloud to intercept its rays, seems to be all on

fire ; but the sea-breezes which spring up in the day-time, and the land-breezes that blow during the night, alternately alleviate the heat of the atmosphere ; yet the calms, that now and then intervene, stifle these refreshing gales, and the inhabitants are reduced to suffer the inconveniencies of excessive drought.

The effect of the two different seasons is still more remarkably felt in the two Indian oceans, where they are distinguished by the name of the dry and rainy monsoons. While the sea that washes the coasts of Malabar is agitated by storms, which the returning sun introduces with the spring, the slightest vessels sail securely along the coast of Coromandel upon a smooth surface, and require neither skill nor precaution in their pilots ; but in the autumn, which in its turn changes the face of the elements, the western coast enjoys a perfect calm, while the eastern Indian ocean is tossed by tempests ; each experiencing, as it were, the alternatives of peace and war. An inhabitant of the island of Ceylon, who contemplates the equatorial region at the two equinoxes, beholds the seas on the right hand and on the left alternately agitated with storms, or lulled into tranquillity ; as if the Author of Nature, in these two instants of equilibrium, turned at once the scales of good and evil, which he holds perpetually in his hands. It is not improbable, that in India, where the two empires of good and evil are divided only by a partition of mountains, the doctrine of the two principles might take its rise ; a doctrine which will never perhaps be entirely effaced from the mind of man, while he remains ignorant of the profound views of the Almighty Being who created the universe. Till a number of obscure questions can be resolved, respecting the necessity of creating the world at a certain period of time ; respecting the seeming imperfections in this most admirable system of things ; respecting the sufferings of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked ; respecting the numberless calamities of nature which fall indiscriminately upon the innocent as well as on the guilty ; man will still be inclined to worship Oromasis or Arima, in proportion as he has experienced the effects of good or evil in this life : since pain and pleasure seem to be as much the origin of the different forms of worship, as they are of the ideas of

mankind. There is so infinite a connection between natural and moral principles, that all systems of importance to the happiness of the human species have taken their colour from the nature of the climate: accordingly, it is observable, that the Indians, whose imaginations receive the deepest impression of nature from the more forcible operation of good and evil, and the view they constantly have of the discord of the elements, are placed in a situation most fertile in revolutions, events, and transactions of every kind.

*Antiquity of Indo-  
stan.*

HENCE it is, that the celebrated countries of India have long engaged the attention of the philosopher and the historian, whose conjectures have assigned to their earliest inhabitants an era of the most extraordinary antiquity. To say the truth, whether we consult historical records, or consider the position of Indostan upon the globe, connected as it is by a chain of mountains to the most elevated part of the continent, which is also at the greatest distance from the encroachments of the sea, we shall readily acknowledge, that the inhabitants of this country are placed in a greater state of security than in any other part of the globe, and that Indostan has been that part of the earth that was first inhabited. We may trace the origin of most of the sciences in the history of that country. Even before the age of Pythagoras, the Greeks travelled to India for instruction; the trade carried on by the Indians with the oldest commercial nations, in exchange for their cloth, is a proof of their great progress in the arts of industry.

Upon the whole, it should seem reasonable to conclude, that a part of the globe, the best adapted to the human species, would be peopled the earliest; and that the first men would be induced to fix their abode in a delicious climate, pure air, and on a soil too fertile to require much cultivation. If the human race could be supposed to multiply and extend themselves in those horrid regions, where they must maintain a perpetual struggle with nature: if they could inhabit burning sands, impracticable morasses, and regions of perpetual ice; or frequent deserts and forests, where they must defend themselves a-

gainst the violence of the elements, and the attacks of wild beasts : how easily might they not form themselves into societies in these delightful countries, where mankind, exempt from necessity, has nothing to pursue but pleasure; where, enjoying without labour or anxiety the choicest productions, and the most glorious prospect of the great scene of nature, they might justly assume the distinguishing title of lords of the creation ! These beautiful scenes present themselves on the banks of the Ganges, and in the plains of Indostan. The air is perfumed with the most delicious fruits, which afford a wholesome and refreshing nourishment ; the trees form a shade impenetrable to the rays of the sun. While the living animals that are dispersed over the globe, cannot subsist in other parts without destroying each other, they share in India, in common with their master, the sweets of plenty and security. Even at this day, when the earth may be supposed to have been exhausted by the productions of so many ages, and their consumption in foreign countries, Indostan, if we except a few sandy and barren districts, is still the most fruitful-country in the world.

THE system of morals in this country is no less extraordinary than that of nature. When we fix our eyes on this vast region, where nature hath exerted her utmost efforts for the happiness of man, we cannot but regret that man hath done all in his power to oppose her. The rage of conquest, and what is no less destructive an evil, the greediness of traders, have, in their turns, ravaged and oppressed the finest country on the face of the globe.

*Religion, government, legislation, manners, and customs of Indostan.*

Among the numbers of savage banditti, and other strangers, whom war or the desire of gain has invited to India, it is easy to distinguish the ancient inhabitants. There is not, however, so much difference in the cast of complexion and outward appearance of these people, as in the particularities of their character ; oppressed as they have been with the yoke of tyranny, or rather of the wildest anarchy, they have not adopted either the manners, the laws, or the religion of their masters. Their continual experience of all the horrors of war, all the



excesses and vices of which human nature is capable, has not tainted their character. Nothing has ever been able to reconcile the tender, humane, and timorous Indian to scenes of blood, or to animate him with the courage and spirit of rebellion. His vices arise solely from a weak mind.

The judicious traveller, who, passing over the plains of Egypt, sees trunks of columns, mutilated statues, broken entablatures, and immense pyramids that have escaped the ravages of war and time, dispersed about the country, is lost in admiration at the view of the ruins of a nation which no longer exists. He cannot now find out the situation of Thebes, that city so celebrated in antiquity for its hundred gates; but the venerable remains of its temples and of its tombs, give him a higher idea of its magnificence, than the descriptions of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

When we attentively examine the accounts given by travellers of the manners of the natives of India, we seem to wander among heaps of ruins, the remains of an immense fabric. The original form is lost; but enough is preserved, to convince us of the magnificence and regularity of the plans. Amidst a variety of absurd superstitions, puerile and extravagant customs, strange ceremonies and prejudices, we may discover the vestiges of sublime morality, deep philosophy, and refined policy; but when we attempt to trace the religious and civil institutions to their origin, we find that it is lost in the maze of antiquity. By the most ancient traditions, the Indians appear to have been the first who received the rudiments of science, and the polish of civilization.

The emperor Mahmoud Akbar had an inclination to make himself acquainted with the principles of all the religious sects throughout his extensive provinces. Having discarded the superstitious notions with which he had been prepossessed by his education in the Mohammedan faith, he resolved to judge for himself. It was easy for him to be acquainted with the nature of those systems that are formed upon the plan of making proselytes; but he found himself disappointed in his design, when he came to treat with the Indians, who will not admit any person whatever to the participation of their mysteries.

Neither the authority nor promises of Akbar could prevail with the bramins to disclose the tenets of their religion : he was therefore obliged to have recourse to artifice. The stratagem he made use of was, to commit an infant, of the name of Feizi, to be committed to the care of these priests, as a poor orphan of the sacerdotal line, who alone could be initiated into the sacred rites of their theology. Feizi, having received the proper instructions for the part he was to act, was conveyed privately to Benares, the seat of knowledge in Indostan. He was received into the house of a learned bramin, who educated him with the same care as if he had been his son. After the youth had spent ten years in study, Akbar was desirous of recalling him ; but he was struck with the charms of the daughter of his preceptor.

The women of the sacerdotal tribe are looked upon as the greatest beauties in Indostan. The old bramin laid no restraint on the growing passion of the two lovers ; he was fond of Feizi, who had gained his affection by his address and docility, and offered him his daughter in marriage. The young man, divided between love and gratitude, resolved to conceal the fraud no longer ; and falling at the feet of the bramin, discovered the imposture, and asked pardon for his offence.

The priest, without reproaching him in the least, seized a poniard which hung at his girdle, and was going to plunge it into his breast, if Feizi had not prevented him by taking hold of his arm. The young man used every means to pacify him, and declared himself ready to do any thing to expiate his treachery. The bramin, bursting into tears, promised to pardon him, on condition that he should swear never to translate the bedas, or sacred volumes, or disclose to any person whatever the symbol of the bramin creed. Feizi readily promised all that the bramin required : and it is probable that he kept his word.

From time immemorial, the bramins, sole depositories of the books, learning, and regulations, civil as well as religious, had kept them as a secret, which the appearance of death, accompanied with torture, could never force them to disclose. There was no kind of terror, no means of seduction, to which they had not

resisted; when very lately, Mr. Hastings, governor-general of the India company settled at Bengal, the most enlightened man of all the Europeans who have visited the East, became possessed of the Indian code. He bribed some of the bramins, and made others sensible of the ridicule and the inconveniencies of this mysterious reserve. Those old men, whom experience and study had raised above the prejudices of their cast, listened to his representations, in hopes of obtaining a freer exercise of their religion and laws. These persons amounted to eleven in number; the eldest of whom was more than fourscore years of age, and the youngest not less than five and thirty. They consulted eighteen original Shanscrit authors; and the collection of sentences they gathered from them being translated into Persian, under the inspection of the bramins, was turned from Persian into English, by Mr. Halhed. The compilers of the code unanimously refused agreeing to two proposals; one to suppress some scandalous paragraphs, the other to instruct Mr. Halhed in the sacred dialect; so true it is, that the spirit of priesthood is everywhere the same; and that at all times the priest, either from motives of interest or pride, is desirous of keeping the people in ignorance. In order that the work might appear with every possible accuracy, and that it might have every sanction that could be expected, the most learned of the pundits, or bramin lawyers, were called up from different parts of Bengal. The abridged history of the creation of the world, and of the first formation of the casts, such as these religious compilers have related it, at the head of this civil code, is comprised in the following terms:

Brama delights in the peculiar form of worship that is observed in different countries. He attends to the pious man in the mosque, who counts his beads over while he says his prayers. He is present in the temples, and at the adoration of the idols. He is the intimate of the Mussulman, and the friend of the Indian; the companion of the Christian, and the confidant of the Jew. Those men whom he hath endowed with an elevated soul, see nothing in the opposition of sects, and the diversity of religious worships, but one of the effects of the richness he hath displayed in the work of the creation.

The Principle of Truth, or the Supreme Being, having first formed the earth, and the heavens, and the water, and the fire, and the air, produced Brama. Brama is the spirit of God. He is absorbed in self-contemplation. He is present in every part of space. He is one, and to him there is no second. His omniscience is self-inspired, or self-intelligent, and its comprehension includes every possible species. He is subject to no change, nor to the distinctions of past, present, and future. He is an independent being, and separated from the universe. By this omniscient spirit the operations of God are enlivened, and the twenty-four powers of nature are animated. As the eye by the sun, as the pot by the fire, as iron by the magnet, as fire by the fuel, as the shadow by the man, as dust by the wind, as the arrow by the spring of the bow, and as the shade by the tree; so by this spirit the world is endued with the powers of intellect, the powers of the will, and the powers of action. If this spirit emanate from the heart, by the channel of the ear, it causeth the perception of sounds; if it emanate from the heart, by the channel of the skin, it causeth the perception of the touch; if it emanate from the heart, by the channel of the eye, it causeth the perception of visible objects; if it emanate from the heart by the channel of the tongue, it causeth the perception of taste; if it emanate from the heart, by the channel of the nose, it causeth the perception of smell. This spirit also invigorating the five members of action, and invigorating the five members of perception, and invigorating the five elements, and invigorating the five senses, and invigorating the three dispositions of the mind, &c. causeth the creation, or the annihilation of the universe; while it itself beholds every thing as an indifferent spectator. Such is the doctrine of the Reig. Beid.

Brama afterwards created from his mouth wisdom, or the bramin; whose office is to pray, to read, and to instruct; from his arms he created strength, or the cheh-teree, whose business it is to draw the bow, to fight, and to govern; from his belly and thighs he created nourishment, or the bice, to provide the necessaries of life by agriculture and traffic; and from his feet he created sub-

jection, or the fooder, to labour, to serve, and to travel.

The distinction of the four first casts is therefore as ancient as the world, and of divine institution.

Brama afterwards produced in the world mankind, which were to fill up these four casts; and beasts innumerable, and birds, and vegetables, and all inanimate things, and the virtues and the vices. He prescribed to each cast its duties, and these duties are forever recorded in the sacred books.

The first magistrate or sovereign, chosen by Brama, had an iniquitous successor, who perverted the order of society, by authorizing the intermixture of the men and women of the four casts which Brama had instituted; a sacrilegious conjunction from which proceeded the fifth cast, or tribe, called that of Burrun Sunker, which produced a multitude of others. The bramins, incensed at this, put him to death. When the kingdom was thus without a magistrate, the bramins rubbed the two hands of the dead body, and from his right there sprang two sons, one a sovereign, or warrior, the other a bramin; while from his left hand they raised a daughter, whom they married to her brother the warrior, on whom they also conferred the supreme magistracy. This sovereign had conceived the design of putting the tribe of Burrun Sunker, with all its branches, to death. The bramins dissuaded him from it; and advised him to assemble all the individuals that composed it, and assign to them their several occupations, in the sciences, the arts, and the trades, which they and their descendants were to exercise in perpetuity.

From this account, it is evident, that the bramin was so much elated with his origin, that he would have thought it degrading to him to aspire to the magistracy or sovereignty, and that the people are made to revere their chains by their being loaded with them in the name of the Deity. There never was an Indian who attempted to leave the cast in which he was born. The distribution of the Indians into casts, each superior to the other, is a mark of the deepest corruption, and the most ancient system of slavery. It discovers an unjust and disgusting pre-eminence of the priesthood over all other

ranks of society, and a stupid inattention to the first legislator, to the general good of the nation.

The sacred annals of the Indians bear date from the remotest antiquity, and are carried down, without interruption, to the most modern times. They make no mention of that most memorable and most dreadful of all events, the deluge: for the bramins pretend that their sacred books are written before that period, and that this calamity did not extend itself over Indostan. They reckon on the duration of the world by four jogues, or distinct ages.

1. The suttee jogue (or age of purity) is said to have lasted three millions two hundred thousand years; and they hold that the life of man was in that age extended to one hundred thousand years, and that his stature was twenty-one cubits.

2. The tirtâh jogue (or age in which one third of mankind were reprobate) they suppose to have consisted of two millions four hundred thousand years, and that men then lived to the age of ten thousand years.

3. The dwâpââr jogue (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured one million six hundred thousand years, and mens lives were reduced to one thousand years.

4. The collee jogue (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather lessened, for that is the true meaning of collee) is the present era, which they suppose ordained to subsist for four hundred thousand years, of which near fifty thousand are already passed, and man's life in this period is limited to one hundred.

This opinion of the present age being the most corrupt, prevails universally in all parts of the world. The century in which we live is considered everywhere as the refuse of all the centuries: as if vice and virtue were not coëval with man and the existence of the world.

The pundits, or bramin lawyers, still speak the original language in which these ordinances were composed, and which is entirely unknown to the bulk of the people. The bramins speak and write the Shanscrit language, which is very copious and nervous, but the style of the best authors is wonderfully concise. The grammatical rules also are numerous and difficult, though

there are not many anomalies. The Shanſcrit alphabet contains fifty letters. The declenſions in this language are ſeven in number, and have each a ſingular, a dual, and a plural number. Among the ſyllables, ſome are ſhort, ſhorter, and very ſhort; others long, longer, and very long; ſome again are acute, more acute, and moſt acute; others grave, more grave, and moſt grave. It is an idiom of notes and modulation. The laſt ſyllable of the word *bēḍērōō* is a kind of organ note that is held for near a minute. The Shanſcrit poetry comprehends a very great variety of different metres; and the verſification has the ſame kinds of feet, and is attended with as many difficulties as thoſe that occur in other languages, rhyme not excepted. The poems are generally compoſed in ſtanſas, the ſubject of which is uſually moral. *A father in debt is an enemy to his ſon.—A mother of ſcandalous behaviour is an enemy to her ſon.—A wife of a beautiful figure is an enemy to her huſband.—A ſon of no learning is an enemy to his parents.*

The following is a ſpecimen of one of their poems:

“ From the inſatiable deſire of riches, I have digged  
“ beneath the earth; I have ſought by chemiſtry to  
“ tranſmute the metals of the mountains.

“ I have traversed the queen of the oceans; I have  
“ toiled inceſſant for the gratification of monarchs.

“ I have renounced the world to give up my whole  
“ heart to the ſtudy of incantations; I have paſſed  
“ whole nights on the places where the dead are burnt.

“ I have not gained one cowry.—Begone, O a-  
“ varice! thy buſineſs is over.”

A language ſo difficult, and brought to ſuch a degree of perfection, neceſſarily implies a long ſucceſſion of years. At the time that the Shanſcrit was written and ſpoken, the ſeven days of the week were already marked, and the names of the ſeven planets were known in their proper order; the ſugar cane was already cultivated; chemiſtry was known; and wildfire had been invented. Fire arms were then in uſe, and a kind of dart or arrow tipped with fire is deſcribed, which, after it had taken its flight, divided into ſeveral ſeparate darts or ſtreams of flame, each of which took effect, and, when once kindled, could not be extinguiſhed. A weapon of this ſort is alſo

spoken of, which was capable of killing a hundred men at once. But it is chiefly in the civil code of the Indians, which we are going to enter upon, that we find the strongest testimonies of the incredible antiquity of this nation.

We are, therefore, at length in possession of these laws of a people from whom all others seem to have derived their instruction; and who, since their establishment, have experienced no other alterations in their manners and prejudices than such as are inseparable from the character of man, and the influence of the times.

The civil code of the Indians opens with the duties of the sovereign, or magistrate. We read in separate paragraphs, "that he should be beloved and respected; that he should be well informed, and steady, and make himself feared; that he should treat his subjects as his children; protect merit, and reward virtue; that he should show himself to his people; that he should not practise the drinking of wine; but that he should learn first to be master of himself. Neither shall he be seduced by the pleasures of the chase, nor perpetually addicted to play. In all cases he shall spare and excuse the bramins. He shall give a particular encouragement to agriculture. He shall not encroach upon the property of the meanest of his subjects. If he be victorious in war he shall return thanks to the gods of the country, and shall give the spoils of the enemy to the bramins. He shall not retain in his service a great number of buffoons, or parasites, and jesters, and dancers, and athletics. If he cannot apprehend the thief, the injury done shall be repaired at his own expence. If he should collect the accustomed tribute from his subjects, without protecting or taking care of them, he will go to hell. If he should take to himself any part of a pious legacy or donation, he will remain in hell one thousand years. He must know that in a kingdom where men of a certain rank frequent prostitutes, or practise the drinking of wine, such kingdom becomes desolate. If any person, exclusive of the magistrate's counsellors, be acquainted with the designs of the magistrate, his magistracy is not of a long duration. He shall not take counsel of a weak and old man, or of a woman. When he is desirous of consulting



“with his counsellors, he shall choose a retired place, on the top of the house, or on the top of a mountain, or in the desert, or in some such secret recess ; and in places where there are parrots, or other talkative birds, he shall not hold his counsel while they are present.”

If in the whole code there were no other indication than that single line upon pious donations, it would be sufficient to show the hand of the priest in its compilation. But what advantages can we suppose to arise from the entertainment of buffoons, dancers, and jesters, at the court of the magistrate, unless it be for the purpose of relaxation from his more painful functions, or to divert him after his serious occupations ?

What an infinite number of combined qualities are necessary to the formation of a civil code, especially for the use of an extensive nation ! A profound knowledge of man, of the climate, of religion, of manners, of customs, of prejudices, of natural justice, of rights, of affinities, of conditions, of things, of duties in all stations, and of the due proportion between crimes and punishments ! What judgement, what impartiality, what experience doth it not require ? Is it possible to determine whether the code of the Indians has been the work of genius, or the result of the wise combinations of a series of ages ? The decision of this question must be reserved for the man who will take the pains to think deeply upon the subject.

The code begins with regulations on the mutation of property, which is one of the first cements of civil society ; and on inheritance, which is the first step towards the formation of communities. It then proceeds to rules of justice, without which no society can subsist ; and to the forms of administering it, without which the executive part would be arbitrary. Rules are also laid down concerning pledges, divisions of property, donations, wages, slaves ; concerning the duties of citizens, of father, mother, children, husbands and wives ; and concerning the wages of dancing and singing women. After the discussion of these points, which imply a numerous population, an infinite variety of connections, and a consummate experience of the wickedness of mankind, the code treats of rents and leases, of the division of lands, and the produce of agriculture, of cities and towns, of

fines, of injuries and quarrels of all kinds, of empirics, of sharpers, of theft, in which that of persons is included, of incontinence and adultery; and every one of these articles is entered into with a spirit of detail which comprehends the most ordinary kinds of delinquency, as well as those which are more uncommon, and appear even chimerical. Almost every point has been foreseen with judgement, distinguished with sagacity, and prescribed, forbidden, or punished, with justice. Among this multitude of laws, we shall only take notice of those which characterize the early periods of the nation, and which are calculated to strike us, either by their wisdom or by their singularity.

It is prohibited to lend money to women, children, or servants. The interest upon a loan increases in proportion to the inferiority which the cast of the borrower holds in the ranks of the state: an inhuman kind of policy, in which the security of the rich has been more attended to than the wants of the poor. Whatever may be the duration of the loan, the arrears of interest shall rise no higher than double the principal. If a person mortgages the same land to two mortgagees, he shall be punished with death: this is just; for it is a species of theft. The creditor may seize upon an insolvent debtor of the inferior tribes, confine him in his house, and oblige him to work for his benefit. This is a less cruel practice than to throw him into a prison, and make him lie upon straw.

A woman of bad morals, a childless widow, a barren wife, a man who has no principles of religion, an eunuch, an idiot, a man banished from his cast, or expelled from his family, one who is born blind or deaf, a dumb man, an impotent man, one who is seized with a consumption or a leprosy, or one who has smitten his father; all such persons are incapable of inheritance. But whoever shall supersede these persons in the inheritance of bequeathed property must allow them victuals and clothing.

The Indians do not make wills. Their claims and rights are determined by the degrees of affinity.

The share of the child who has profited by his education, shall be double to that of the ignorant child.

Almost all the laws of the code, which concern property, succession, and distribution, are conformable to the Roman laws; because reason and equity are of all ages, and dictate the same regulations, unless they be thwarted by capricious customs or extravagant prejudices, the origin of which is lost in the obscurity of remote times; while their antiquity supports them against the rules of common sense, and the vain efforts of the legislator.

If an injustice be committed in a tribunal, the fault shall fall upon all the parties concerned in the action, the judge himself not excepted. It were to be wished that this rule might obtain in all courts of judicature, and that the judge might be made a party in the case. If he should have judged ill from incapacity, he is culpable; if from iniquity, he is still more guilty.

The code, after having condemned the false witness to the same punishment that would have been inflicted on the person accused, admits of a false testimony for the preservation of a man's life, against a true evidence that would deprive him of it. What an unaccountable mixture of wisdom and folly!

A husband in distress may deliver up his wife, if she consent; and a father may sell his son if he have several. Of these two laws, the first is infamous, as it reduces the mother of a family to the condition of a prostitute; the second is inhuman, as it reduces a son to the state of a slave.

The different classes of slaves are enormously multiplied among the Indians; and the law admits of their enfranchisement, which is performed with a particular kind of ceremony. "The slave shall fill a pitcher with water, and put in it some rice cleansed without boiling, some flowers, and a kind of small salad; and taking the pitcher upon his shoulder, shall stand near his master; and the master, putting the pitcher upon the slave's head, shall then break the pitcher, so that the water, rice, flowers, and salad, that were in the pitcher, may fall upon the slave's body; after that, the master shall three times pronounce the words, *I have made you free*. Upon this speech, the slave aforesaid shall take some steps towards the east, whereupon he shall be free."

If a man kill an animal, such as a horse, a goat, or a camel, one hand and one foot shall be cut off from him. By this law we see that man is put upon a par with the brute creation. If he kill a tyger, a bear, or a serpent, he shall pay a pecuniary fine. The ranking of these things among offences, is the superstitious consequence of the metempsychosis, which, considering the body of an animal as being the residence of a human soul, looks upon the violent death of a reptile as a species of murder. It is a custom with a bramin, before he sits down on the ground, to sweep the place with the lappet of his gown, and to say to God, "as I have extended my benevolence to the ant, so I hope thou wilt pour down thine upon me."

Population is holden as a primary duty, and as an order of nature so sacred, that the code allows the practice of deceit, of lying, and of perjury, for the purpose of completing a wedding. This is a dishonest action practised everywhere, but which was never legally authoris'd, except among the Indians. Would it not be a mark of wisdom in the legislator to authorise, in many other instances, what he can neither prevent nor punish.

All the religious systems of Asia admit of polygamy, and some of them suffer a plurality of husbands. In the kingdoms of Boutan and the Thibet, one woman frequently serves for a whole family, without creating the least jealousy or domestic confusion.

Virginity is a condition essential to the validity of the conjugal union. The woman is under the despotic sway of her husband. The Indian code says, "that a woman should by no means be mistress of her own actions; for, if she have her own free will, she will always be amiss; and that her virtue is not to be relied upon." If a woman bring her husband nothing but daughters, he may be dispensed from cohabiting with her. A woman shall never go out of the house without the consent of her husband, and shall always have some clothes upon her bosom. It is proper for a woman, after her husband's death, to burn herself in the fire with his corpse, unless she be with child, or that her husband be absent, or that she cannot get his turban, or his girdle, or unless she devote herself to chastity and celibacy.

Every woman who thus burns herself, shall remain in paradise with her husband for an infinite number of years by destiny.

The legislation of the Indians, which might be found too indulgent with respect to certain crimes, such as the murder of a slave, pederasty, and bestiality, for which absolution could be obtained with money, will certainly appear to bear extremely hard upon the unlawful intercourse between the two sexes. This degree of rigour has probably arisen from the lubricity of the women, and the weakness of the men in a burning climate; from the inordinate jealousy of the latter; from the fear of confounding the casts; and from the extravagant ideas of continency, propagated in all countries by incontinent priests: and it is at the same time a proof of the antiquity of the code. In proportion as society increases and becomes permanent, corruption is extended: offences, particularly such as spring from the nature of the climate, the influence of which never ceases, are multiplied; and the punishments allotted to them gradually fall into disuse, unless the code be under the sanction of the divinity. Our laws have pronounced a severe punishment for adultery; but who is there that suspects it?

What we call an intercourse of gallantry, the code calls adultery. There is a species of adultery that consists in the coquetry of the man or the woman, the penalty for which is pecuniary; the adultery which consists in sending presents, is punished in the man by mutilation; and consummated adultery is punished by death. The daughter of a bramin who prostitutes herself is condemned to be burnt. Immodest actions, the differences of which are specified by law, because law has no restraint; but which decency forbids an historical writer to mention, are subject to dreadful punishments. A man of a superior cast, convicted of having cohabited with a woman of a mean cast, is to be branded in the forehead with the figure of a man without a head. Other punishments of an indecent kind are devised for a bramin convicted of adultery, and his partner in iniquity is put to death.

The dancing and singing girls, and the prostitutes, are formed into communities under the protection of the police. They are employed in solemnities; and are sent

out to meet persons in public capacities. This sort of people were not holden in so much contempt in ancient times as they are at present. Before the establishment of laws, the state of man differed little from that of the brute; and no prejudice had attached an idea of turpitude to any of our natural functions.

If a prostitute should break her word, she shall return twice as much money as she has received. If a man hath hired a prostitute, and shall attempt to commit any unnatural act with her, he shall give her eight times the sum stipulated, and also pay a fine of eight times as much to the magistrate. The punishment is the same, if, after having agreed with her for himself, he gives her up to other men.

Gaming is not allowed, unless with leave of the magistrate. The money lost at a game played in secret cannot be exacted.

If a man strike a bramin with his hand or his foot, he shall have his hand or foot cut off.

If a fooder, or man of the fourth cast, be convicted of reading the beids, or sacred books, he shall have boiling oil poured into his mouth; if he should listen to the reading of the beids of the shaster, then the oil, heated as before, shall be poured into his ears, and wax shall be melted together, and the orifice of his ears shall be stopped up with it.

If a fooder shall sit upon the carpet of a bramin, in that case, the magistrate, having thrust a hot iron into his buttock, and branded him, shall banish him the kingdom; or else he shall cut off his buttock. Whatever crime a bramin may have committed, he shall not be put to death. The murder of a bramin is the greatest crime any man can be guilty of.

The property of a bramin is sacred, and cannot pass into other hands, not even those of the sovereign. This gives an instance of estates in mortmain among the Indians, in times of the most remote antiquity.

The silence of the law upon any point is to be supplied by a reprimand. The punishment of every fault is increased upon repetition. The instruments of a man's art or profession, and even those that belong to the dancing girl, or common prostitute, are not liable to confiscation.

What would an Indian say, if he were to see our officers of justice seize upon the furniture in a peasant's cottage, and put up his oxen, and all his instruments of tillage, to public auction?

To conclude this short analysis of a code too little known amongst us, by some striking passages, we shall quote the following, respecting the magistrate: "When a kingdom is preserved free from thieves, from adulterers, from murderers, and from all men of such evil principles, the magistrates of the kingdom go to paradise; and if the magistrate always brings such persons to punishment, he then also goes to paradise; and his kingdom is doubled, and his reputation is increased!" And again: "If a magistrate inflict punishment upon the guilty, and honourably treat the innocent, such a man has all the requisites for magistracy, and is always successful, and enjoys a good character, and in the next world goes to paradise:" for, saith the code, with as much energy as simplicity, "Punishment is the magistrate; punishment is the inspirer of terror; punishment is the nourisher of the subjects; punishment is the defender from calamity; punishment is the guardian of those that sleep; punishment, with a black aspect and a red eye, terrifies the guilty."

Notwithstanding the defects of this code, the most striking of which are, too much indulgence to the priests, and too much severity against women, yet it still serves to confirm the high opinions entertained of the wisdom of the bramins in the most remote ages. Among the number of sensible laws with which it abounds, if there be some which may appear too lenient or too rigid; some which prescribe mean or indecent actions; and others again which inflict heinous punishments for slight offences, or mild chastisements for crimes of great enormity; yet the wise man, before he ventures to censure them, will weigh all the circumstances; and will consider, that a legislator is often compelled by them to give to the people only the best laws they are capable of receiving. He will determine, without hesitation, from the complicated regularity of the Shanscrit grammar, upon the antiquity of this language formerly in common use, but for so long a time unknown: and from the formation of a code so ex-

tensive as that of the Indians, he will conclude that a great number of ages are elapsed in India, between the barbarous and civilized state of that country; and that the priests have been culpable, with respect to their own countrymen as well as to foreigners, in keeping up a mysterious reserve, which has been an universal check to the progress of civilization.

The seal, however, which closed the mouth of the bramin, is now broken; and we may presume, that the time is not far distant, when all that remains to be known of the ancient religion and jurisprudence of the Indians will be revealed. In the mean while, let us examine their present state, and furnish some strokes of character that are wanting to complete the description of their policy and their doctrines.

As the bramins are the only persons who understand the language of the sacred book, their comments on the text are the same as those which have ever been made on religious writings; all the maxims which fancy, interest, passion, or false zeal, can suggest, are to be found in these volumes. These exclusive pretensions of the interpreters of religion have given them that unbounded influence over the people, which impostors and fanatics will not fail to exert over men who have not the courage to consult either their own reason, or their own feelings.

From the Indus to the Ganges, the *vedan* is universally received as the book that contains the principles of religion; but the generality differ on several points relative to faith and practice. That spirit of debate and refinement, which for so many ages has infected the philosophy of our schools, has made still further progress among the bramins, and caused more absurdities in their doctrines than it has introduced into ours, by a mixture of Platonism, which is perhaps itself derived from the doctrines of the bramins.

Throughout all Indostan, the laws of government, customs and manners, make a part of religion; because every thing is derived from Brama.

There is some reason to believe that Brama was possessed of the sovereign authority; as his religious institutions were evidently designed to inspire the people with a profound reverence and great love for their country, and as



they are evidently intended to guard against the vices incident to the climate by severe laws. Few religions seem to have been so well adapted to the countries for which they were calculated.

It is from Brama that the Indians derive their religious veneration for the three capital rivers of Indostan, the Indus, the Cristina, and the Ganges. It was he who consecrated the animal that is most serviceable in the cultivation of land, as well as the cow, whose milk is so wholesome a nourishment in hot countries. To him they ascribe the division of the people into tribes or *castes*, distinguished from each other by their political and religious principles. This institution is antecedent to all traditions and known records, and may be considered as the most striking proof of the great antiquity of the Indians. Nothing appears more contrary to the natural progress of social connections, than this distribution of the members of the same community into distinct classes. Such an idea could only be the result of a studied plan of legislation, which presupposes a great proficiency in civilization and knowledge. Another circumstance still more extraordinary is, that this distinction should continue so many ages, after the leading idea and connecting tie was forgotten; which affords us a remarkable example of the strength of national prejudices, when sanctified by religious ideas.

The difference between the casts is remarkable at first sight. The members of each tribe have a kind of resemblance to each other, by which it is impossible to mistake them. They have the same habits, the same shape, the same tone of voice, the same beauty, or the same deformity of person. All travellers of any degree of observation, have taken notice of this kind of family air. There are several orders of bramins: those who mix in society are for the most part very corrupt in their morals; they believe that the water of the Ganges will wash away all their crimes; and not being subject to any civil jurisdiction, they live without either restraint or virtue, excepting that character of compassion and charity which is so commonly found in the mild climate of India.

The others who live abstracted from the world, are either weak-minded men or enthusiasts, and abandon themselves to laziness, superstition, and the dreams of

metaphysics. We find in their disputes the very same ideas that occur in the writings of our most celebrated metaphysicians; such as, substance, accident, priority, posteriority, immutability, indivisibility, the vital and sensitive soul; but with this difference, that in India these fine discoveries are very ancient, though it is but a very short time since father Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Leibnitz, and Malebranche, astonished all Europe with their dexterity in raising these visionary systems. As this abstracted manner of reasoning was derived to us from the Greek philosophers, whose refinements we have far exceeded, it is not improbable that the Greeks themselves might have borrowed this ridiculous knowledge from the Indians, unless we rather choose to suppose, that as the principles of metaphysics lie open to the capacities of all nations, the indolence of the bramins may have produced the same effect in India, as that of our monks has done in Europe: notwithstanding the inhabitants of one country had never communicated their doctrines to those of the other.

Such are the descendants of the ancient brahmans, whom antiquity never speaks of but with admiration; because the affectation of austerity and mystery, and the privilege of declaring the will of Heaven, have imposed upon the vulgar in all ages. The Greeks ascribe to them the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and certain notions concerning the nature of the Supreme Being, and future rewards and punishments.

To this species of knowledge, which is the more flattering to the curiosity of man in proportion as it transcends his weak capacity, the brahmans added an infinite number of religious observances, which were adopted by Pythagoras in his school; such as fasting, prayer, silence, and contemplation; virtues of the imagination, which have a more powerful effect upon the vulgar, than those of a useful and benevolent tendency. The brahmans were looked upon as the friends of the gods, because they affected to pay them so much attention; and as the protectors of mankind, because they paid them none. No bounds were therefore set to the respect and gratitude that were shown them; princes themselves did not scruple to consult these recluses upon any critical conjuncture,

from a supposition, no doubt, that they were inspired; since it was impossible to imagine that they had the advantages of experience. We can scarcely, however, deny, that there might be among them some men of real virtue, whose minds relished the pure and ingenuous delights of study and science; and who, by nobly raising their thoughts to the contemplation of the First Being, must have had more powerful incitements to render themselves worthy of his care, and none to justify them in deceiving and tyrannizing over their fellow creatures.

The class of military men is diffused over the whole country under different denominations. In the Malabar they are called Nairs; and here they are a well-made and brave set of men; but proud, effeminate, and superstitious. Some of the most fortunate of them have contrived to provide means of subsistence for themselves upon this coast as in other parts; while others possess some little share of property. The greatest number of them are active officers or soldiers in the camps. It is generally known that they have an inclination to plunder and extortions; which they usually display upon the public roads. Every prudent traveller, therefore, takes the precaution to get himself attended by some of them; and those who are paid for this service, will rather suffer themselves to be massacred, than survive the stranger who has put himself under their protection. Were they to betray this trust, their nearest relations would put them to death. These manners are peculiar to the Malabar country; for the other soldiers of Indostan have not such vicious propensities.

Independent of the class of warriors, there are people, such, for instance, as the Canarins and Marattas, who generally follow the military profession, either because they are the descendants of some tribes devoted originally to arms, or because times and circumstances have introduced a change in their primitive institutions.

The third class consists entirely of husbandmen; and there are few countries where this set of men have a better title to the gratitude of their fellow-subjects; they are laborious and industrious, perfectly acquainted with the art of distributing their rivulets, and of making the burning soil they inhabit as fertile as possible. They are

in India what they would be everywhere else, if not corrupted or oppressed by government, the most honest and virtuous of men. This class, which was formerly much respected, was free from tyranny and the ravages of war; never were the husbandmen obliged to bear arms; their lands and their labours were holden equally sacred; they ploughed their fields within view of contending armies, who suffered them to pursue their peaceful toil without molestation; their corn was never set on fire, nor their trees cut down; religion too, that all-powerful principle, lent her assistance to reason, which, though it inculcates indeed the propriety of protecting useful occupations, has not of itself sufficient influence to enforce the execution of its own laws.

The tribe of mechanics is branched out into as many subdivisions as there are trades; no one is allowed to relinquish the employment of his parents; for this reason industry and vassalage have ever gone hand in hand, and carried the arts to as high a degree of perfection as they can possibly attain without the assistance of taste and imagination, which seldom unfold themselves but under the kind influences of emulation and liberty.

To this tribe of mechanics, which is infinitely extensive, two kinds of employment belong, remarkable for the singularity of some of their customs. One of them is that of the only workmen who are allowed to dig wells and ponds. These are the strongest and most laborious men of the country. Their wives share their labours with them; they even eat with them; a privilege, which, throughout all Indostan, these women enjoy only in common with the wives of the carriers.

This last set of men, to whom all the business of carriage belongs, have no fixed residence, but travel over the whole peninsula. Their families and their merchandise are carried upon the backs of oxen; which, whether from usurpation or original right, they feed upon all the roads, without paying. One of the most important employments of those men is to provide subsistence for the armies. They are suffered to pass freely through one camp, in order to supply the wants of another. Their persons, their beasts of burden, and even the provisions that belong to them, are all sacred. If it were proved

that the provisions they carry were the property of the enemy, they would be seized upon; but the rest of the convoy would continue its march unmolested.

Beside these tribes, there is a fifth, which is the refuse of all the rest; the members of it are employed in the meanest offices of society: they bury the dead, carry away dirt, and live upon the flesh of animals that die natural deaths. They are prohibited from entering into the temples and public markets; neither are they allowed the use of the wells that are common to all the inhabitants. Their dwellings are at the extremity of the towns, or consist of solitary cottages in the country; and they are even forbidden to appear in the streets where the brahmins reside. As all other Indians, they may employ themselves in the labours of agriculture, but only for the benefit of the other tribes; for they had never any lands of their own, not even upon lease. Such is the degree of horror they excite, that if by chance they were to touch any one not belonging to their tribe, they would be deprived with impunity of a life reckoned too abject to deserve the protection of the laws.

The fate of these unhappy wretches, who are known on the coast of Coromandel by the name of *Parias*, is the same even in these countries where a foreign dominion has contributed to produce some little change in the ideas of the people. Their degradation is still more complete on the Malabar coast, which has not been subdued by the Mogul, and where they are called *Pouliats*.

Most of them are employed in the culture of rice. Near the fields where they carry on this work, there is a kind of hut, into which they retire, when they hear a cry which always comes from a distance, to give them notice of some order from the person on whom they depend; to which they answer, without coming out of their retreat. They take the same precautions, whenever they are warned by a confused kind of noise of the approach of any man whatever. If they have not time to hide themselves, they fall prostrate upon the ground, with their face downwards, with all the marks of humiliation which the sense of their disgrace can suggest. Whenever the harvests do not answer to the avidity of an oppressive master, he sometimes cruelly sets fire to the huts of these unhappy la-

bourers ; and if they attempt to escape the flames, which seldom happens, he fires upon them without mercy.

The condition of these wretched people is horrible in every respect, even in the manner in which they are forced to provide for the most urgent wants. In the dusk of the evening, they come out from their retreats, in bands more or less numerous ; they direct their steps towards the market, at a certain distance from which they begin to bellow. The merchants approach, and the Pouliats ask for what they want. They are supplied ; and the provisions are laid for them upon the very spot where the money destined for the payment of them has been previously deposited. When the purchasers can be assured that they shall not be seen by any one, they come out from behind the hedge where they had concealed themselves, and carry away, with precipitation, what they have acquired in so singular a manner.

These Pouliats, however, the eternal object of contempt among the other tribes, have expelled, as it is said, from among themselves the Pouliches, still more degraded. These last are forbidden the use of fire ; they are not permitted to build huts, but are reduced to the necessity of living in a kind of nest, which they make for themselves in the forests, and upon the trees. When pressed with hunger, they howl like wild beasts, to excite the compassion of the passengers. The most charitable among the Indians then deposit some rice, or other food, at the foot of a tree ; and retire with all possible haste, to give the famished wretch an opportunity of taking it without meeting with his benefactor, who would think himself polluted by coming near him.

This extreme disgrace, into which a considerable part of a numerous nation is plunged, has always appeared an inexplicable circumstance. Men of the utmost sagacity have never been able to conceive, how a people, humane and sensible, could have brought themselves to reduce their own brethren to so abject a state. To solve this difficulty, let us be permitted to hazard a conjecture. In our half barbarous governments, dreadful torments, or an ignominious death, are allotted to those criminals who have disturbed, in a greater or less degree, the peace of society. May we not therefore reasonably suppose, that,

in the soft climate of India, a more moderate system of legislation may have been satisfied with excluding from their tribes all kinds of malefactors? This punishment must appear to them sufficient to put a stop to the commission of such crimes; and it was certainly the best adapted to a country where the effusion of blood was always forbidden, by religious, as well as moral principles. It would certainly have been a very proper circumstance, if the children had not inherited the infamy of their parents; but there were unfurmountable prejudices, which militated against this re-instatement. There never was an instance of a family being received again into a tribe, after it had once been expelled from it.

The Europeans, by living with these unhappy people upon terms of common humanity, have at length made themselves almost equally the objects of detestation among the Indians. This detestation prevails, even to this day, in the inland parts of the country, where the want of intercourse keeps alive those rooted prejudices, which wear off gradually near the sea-coasts, where the interests and mutual wants of commerce unite men with each other, and necessarily introduce juster notions of human nature.

All these classes are for ever separated from each other by unfurmountable barriers; they are not allowed to intermarry, live, or eat together. Whoever transgresses this rule, is banished, as a disgrace to his tribe.

One might expect that these separations should not exist in the temples. There we ought, at least, to recollect, that distinctions of birth are merely a matter of social convention; and that all men, without exception, are brethren, and children of the same God: but this is by no means the case here. Some of the tribes, indeed, draw near to the foot of the altars, and are confounded with each other; but the lowest of them feel the humiliating state of their condition, even in the pagodas.

The religious system which has given a sanction to the subordination of rank among the Indians, has not had sufficient influence to prevent them entirely from aspiring to those marks of distinction which are appropriated to the superior classes. Ambition, so natural to mankind, has sometimes exerted itself, and singular expedients have been tried by men of restless spirit, to share with the bra-

mins the veneration of the multitude : this has given rise to a race of monks, known in India by the name of Jogueys.

Men of all the respectable tribes or casts are permitted to follow this class of life ; nothing more is required of them, than to emulate the bramins in abstracted contemplation and indolence : but, at the same time, they are obliged to surpass them in austerities. Accordingly, the severities which our most enthusiastic monks impose upon themselves, are not to be compared to the horrible torments to which an Indian monk devotes himself. The Jogueys, bent under the weight of their chains, stretched upon a dunghill, and extenuated by mortifications, watching, and fasting, exhibit a spectacle interesting to the multitude.

Most of them go about the country, where they receive the homage of the people, and even of the great, who, either from motives of principle or policy, often descend from their elephants, to prostrate themselves at the feet of these disgusting mortals. Fruits, flowers, and perfumes are offered to them on all sides. They demand with haughtiness what they want, and receive what is presented to them as a tribute ; nor does this arrogance ever lessen the veneration that is paid to them. The object of their ambition is to collect materials for planting trees, for digging ponds, and for repairing or building pagodas,

Those among them who prefer living in the woods, are visited in their solitude by numbers of women whose rank is not sufficient to oblige them to lead a recluse life, and especially those who have no children. They often find in their pilgrimage an end to their sterility, which is more ignominious in India than anywhere else.

The men of this order, whose miracles have been most extolled by report, are drawn towards the cities, where they fix their residence : but still they live under tents, or in the open air. There it is, that they receive marks of respect from all quarters, and that they give their advice, which is eagerly sought after. They scarce ever condescend to visit even the palaces, where their presence would be esteemed the highest honour. If they sometimes yield to the entreaties of some woman of very considerable rank,



their sandals, which they leave at the door, give notice to the husband that he is not allowed to enter.

The marvellous of the Indian mythology is less agreeable and less alluring than that of the Greeks. They have a scape-horse, analogous to the scape-goat of the Jews. They admit, as we do, good and bad angels. The Lord, saith the Shaster, formed the resolution of created beings, who might partake of his glory. He spoke, and angels rose into existence: they sang, in concert, the praises of their Creator; and harmony reigned in the celestial regions; when two of these spirits having revolted, drew a legion after them. The Supreme Being drove them into a place of torment, from whence they were released at the intercession of the faithful angels, upon conditions which at once inspired them with joy and terror. The rebels were sentenced, under different forms, to undergo, in the lowest of the fifteen planets, punishments proportionate to the enormity of their first offence: accordingly, each angel underwent eighty-seven transmigrations upon earth, before he animated the body of a cow, which holds the highest rank among the animal tribes. These different transmigrations are so many stages of expiation, preparatory to a state of probation, which commences as soon as the angel transmigrates from the body of the cow into that of a human being: in this situation, the Creator enlarges his intellectual faculties, and constitutes him a free agent; and his good or bad conduct hastens or retards the time of his pardon. The good are at their death, re-united to the Supreme Being; and the wicked begin anew the era of their expiation.

From this tradition it appears, that the metempsychosis is an actual punishment; and that the souls which animate the generality of the brute creation, are nothing more than wicked spirits. This explanation is certainly not universally adopted in India. It was probably invented by some devotee of a melancholy and rigid cast; for the doctrine of the transmigration of souls seems originally to have been founded rather on hope than fear.

In fact, it is natural to suppose, that it was only adopted at first as an idea that flattered and soothed mankind, and would easily be embraced in a country where men,

living under the influence of a delicious climate and a mild government, began to be sensible of the shortness of life. A system, therefore, which extended it beyond its natural limits, could not fail to be well received. It is a consolation to an old man, who sees himself deserted by all that is dear to him, to imagine that his enjoyments will still remain, and that his dissolution only opens a passage to another scene of existence. At the same time, it is equally a matter of consolation to the friends who attend him in his last moments, to think, that in leaving the world, he does not relinquish the hopes of rising once more into life. Hence was the rise and progress of the doctrine of transmigration. Reason, dissatisfied with this illusion, may urge in vain, that, without recollection, there can be no continuance or identity of being; and that, if a man does not remember that he has existed, he is in the same situation as if he had never existed before:—Sentiment adopted what reason disallowed.

The Shaster, no doubt, has given a greater air of severity to the doctrine of the metempsychosis, with a view of making it more instrumental in supporting the system of morality necessary to be established. Accordingly, upon this idea of transmigration considered in the light of a punishment, the Shaster explains the duties which the angels were required to perform. The principal ones were charity, abstinence from animal food, and a scrupulous adherence to the profession of their ancestors. This last mentioned prejudice, in which all these people agree, notwithstanding they differ in their opinions concerning its origin, is without example, unless it be among the ancient Egyptians, whose institutions, and those of the Indians, have certainly some historical relation to each other, which is now unknown to us. But though the Egyptian laws established a distinction of ranks, none were held in contempt: while, on the contrary, the laws of Brama, by the introduction, perhaps, of some abuses, seem to have condemned one part of the nation to pain and infamy.

It is evident, from the civil code, that the Indians were almost as civilized when Brama instituted his laws, as they are at present. Whenever a community begins to assume a certain form, it naturally divides into several

classes, according to the variety and extent of those arts that are necessary to supply its demands.

It was doubtless the intention of Brama, in confirming these different professions by sanctions in religion, and in confining the exercise of them perpetually to the same families, to give them a lasting establishment on political principles; but he did not foresee, that, by these means, he should obstruct the progress of discoveries, which in future might give rise to new occupations. Accordingly, if we may judge from the scrupulous attention paid by the Indians at this day to the laws of Brama, we may affirm, that industry has made no advances among this people since the time of this legislator; and that they were almost as civilized as they are at present, when they first received his laws. This remark is sufficient to give us an idea of the antiquity of these people, who have made no improvements in knowledge since an era which seems to be the most ancient in history.

Different kinds of food were prescribed by Brama for these respective tribes. The military, and some other casts, are allowed to eat venison and mutton; some husbandmen and mechanics are indulged in the use of fish; while others live only on milk and vegetables. The brahmins eat nothing that has had life. In general these people are extremely sober; but their abstinence is more or less rigid, in proportion to the degree of labour their professions require. They are married in their infancy.

The extravagant custom of burying the living with the dead, has prevailed in the old, as well as in the new hemisphere; among barbarous and civilized nations, in the most desert, as in the most populous regions. Countries which never had any communication with each other, have equally exhibited this cruel spectacle. Pride, excessive self-love, and other passions or vices, may have led men into the same error in different climates.

It may, however, be presumed, that a practice so evidently contrary to reason, has been chiefly derived from the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and of a future life. The hope of being served in the other world by the same persons who have obeyed us in this, has been the cause of the slave being sacrificed on the tomb of his master, and the wife on the corpse of her husband. Ac-

cordingly, all the records of this kind bear witness, that these sacrifices are most frequently made upon the ashes of princes.

According to this principle, the Indians ought never to have been led astray by the idea of such an extravagant custom. Their prejudice in favour of the metempsychosis, is well known. They have always believed, and probably they will ever adhere to the same persuasion, that the soul, at the dissolution of the body, goes to animate another; and that these successive and continual transmigrations will never cease. How is it possible, that, with such a system, it can have been supposed, that the ashes of a wife would be mixed with those of a husband, from whom she was to be separated eternally? This is one of those numberless inconsistencies which, in all parts of the world, degrade the human mind.

It has been a matter of doubt, upon what principle this institution has been founded, till our opinions were determined upon this point, by the publication of the civil code of Indostan, translated from the Shanferit.

The widows of the Indians, whatever propensity every living creature may have to its own preservation, resolve upon the sacrifice of their lives with a degree of boldness. If they should recede from it, they would be degraded, covered with rags, devoted to the meanest employments, and despised by the lowest of the slaves. These motives may possibly have some share in strengthening their resolution: but they are chiefly urged on to this desperate act, from the fear of leaving an odious memory behind them, and of consigning to infamy their children, whom they love with a degree of tenderness which our more obdurate hearts have never experienced.

These horrid scenes are fortunately becoming every day less frequent. The Europeans never permit them in the territories over which their dominion extends. Some Moorish princes have also proscribed them in their provinces. Those among them whom the thirst of gold has induced still to suffer them, have set this permission at so high a price, that it can seldom be purchased. But even this difficulty sometimes increases the eagerness to obtain it. There are women who have been known to devote themselves for a long time to the most humiliating and

hardest labour, in order to collect the sums required for this extravagant suicide.

A bramin's widow, young, beautiful, and engaging, was desirous of exhibiting this tragic scene at Surat; but her solicitations were not complied with. The lady, full of indignation, took a handful of burning coals, and, seemingly regardless of the pain, said in a firm tone to the nabob: "Consider not alone the tenderness of my age and of my sex; see with what insensibility I hold this fire in my hands; and know, that with equal constancy I shall throw myself into the flames."

Truth, falsehood, shame, and all sorts of civil or religious prejudices, are therefore capable of exalting the mind of man to a contempt of life, the greatest of all blessings; of death, the greatest of all terrors; and of pain, the greatest of all evils. Short-sighted legislators, why have ye not discovered this powerful spring of action? Or, if ye have known it, why have ye not availed yourselves of it, to attach us to our duties? What good fathers, what obedient children, what true friends, what faithful citizens would ye not have made of us, by the mere distribution of the motives of honour and shame? If, in the Malabar country, the fear of contempt urges a young woman to throw herself into the flames, in what part of the world would not the same principle induce a mother to suckle her own child, or a wife to be true to her husband?

This kind of courage, which is founded on prejudice rather than on character, is the only one the Indians possess. In other respects, they are of a weak, mild, and humane disposition; and almost strangers to several of the passions that prevail among us. What motive of ambition, indeed, could there be among men destined to continue always in the same state? The constant and repeated exercise of the religious ceremonies is the only pleasure most of them enjoy. They love peaceable labour, and an indolent life; and often quote this passage of one of their favourite authors: "'Tis better to sit still than to walk; better to sleep than to awake; but death is better than all."

Their constitution, and the excessive heat of their climate, do not, as it has often been said, restrain the

impetuosity of their sensual appetites, or weaken their propensity to amorous pleasures. The multitude of courtezans with which the country abounds, and the attention of the parents to marry their children before the sexes can have any intercourse with each other, are proofs of the violence of their passions. They are also addicted to avarice, the vice of weak bodies and narrow minds.

Their arts are of little consequence. If we except their cottons, there is nothing that comes from India that has either taste or elegance. The sciences are still more neglected; and the knowledge of the most learned bramins does not go beyond the calculation of an eclipse. Before the Tartars had penetrated into this country, there was not a single bridge thrown over the rivers, to make them passable. Nothing can be more wretched than the houses of prayer they have lately built. The ancient pagodas, it is true, astonish us by their solidity and extent; but their structure and ornaments are of the worst kind. Representations of animals and miracles, coarsely carved in brick, cover the outside, as well as the inside of the walls. In the midst of the temple, upon an altar richly ornamented, stands a divinity, of a colossal size, which is blackened by the smoke of the lights that are constantly burning round it; and the front of which is always turned towards the principal gate, in order that those among its worshippers to whom the entrance of the sanctuary is forbidden, may have a view of the object of their adoration. When the people repair to their exercises of devotion, they are ushered in by the sound of music; and they carry fans, for the purpose of keeping off insects. The mode of doing homage to the idol, is, by songs, dances, and offerings. If the reputation of the divinity be spread far abroad, thousands of pilgrims, in large caravans, are seen flocking in from the most distant places; who, in the course of their journey, are treated with the most generous hospitality. These pious fanatics are never stopped in these laborious expeditions, by the necessity of paying to the Mogul government a tribute proportioned to their quality.

The military class have chosen to fix their residence in the northern provinces; and the peninsula is chiefly inhabited by the inferior tribes. Hence it has happened,

that all the powers who have attacked India on the side of the sea, have met with so little resistance. It may not be improper to remind those philosophers who maintain that man is an animal destined to subsist upon the fruits of the earth, that the military people who indulge in animal food, are more robust, courageous, and animated, and live longer than those of the other classes who feed upon vegetables. It must, however, be acknowledged, that the difference between the inhabitants of the north and south is of too uniform a cast to be attributed entirely to the particular kind of nourishment they use. On one hand, the cold, the elasticity of the air, less fertility, and more labour and exercise, with a more varied kind of life; all these circumstances increase the appetite and the strength, excite a spirit of resolution and activity, and give a firmer tone and a longer power of duration to the organs: on the other, the heats of the south, together with great quantities of fruit, the facility of subsisting without an active life, a constant perspiration, a more free and lavish use of the means conducive to population, more indulgence in effeminate pleasures, and a sedentary and uniform course of existence; these several circumstances, while they increase the number of births, occasion a speedier dissolution. Upon the whole, it should seem, that, though man was not by nature formed to consume the flesh of animals, he is endued with a power of accommodating himself to the various modes of life that prevail in every different climate; he therefore feeds upon the spoils of the chase, upon the produce of the waters, or upon the fruits of the earth; and becomes either a shepherd or a husbandman, according to the fertility or barrenness of the soil he inhabits.

The religion of Brama, though simple in its origin, is divided into eighty-three sects, which agree in some fundamental points, and have no disputes about the rest: they live in amity with men of all professions, because their own does not oblige them to make proselytes. The Indians seldom admit strangers to their worship, and always with extreme reluctance. This was, in some measure, the spirit of the ancient superstitions, as appears from the example of the Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans: and though it has occasioned less rava-

ges than the zeal of making converts, yet still it prevents the intercourse of society, and raises an additional barrier between one people and another.

When we consider how bounteously nature has provided for the happiness of these fertile countries, where every want is easily supplied, and where the compassionate cast and moral system of the natives render them equally averse from persecution and the spirit of conquest, we cannot help lamenting that a barbarous inequality should have distinguished one part of the nation by power and privileges, while wretchedness and infamy are allotted to the rest of the inhabitants. What can be the cause of this strange abuse of reason? It must doubtless be traced to that principle which has been the constant source of all the calamities that have befallen the inhabitants of this globe.

We need only suppose, that a powerful people, with few lights to direct them, adopt an original error, which ignorance brings into credit : this error soon becomes general, and is made the basis of an entire system of politics and morality ; and men soon begin to find that their most innocent propensities are in opposition with their duties. In order to conform to this new plan of morality, perpetual violence must be offered to the plan of nature. This continual struggle will introduce a most amazing contrariety into their manners ; and the nation will be composed of a set of wretches, who will pass their lives in mutually tormenting each other, and accusing nature. Such is the picture of all the people upon earth, excepting perhaps, a few societies of savages. Absurd prejudices have perverted human reason, and even stifled that instinct which teaches animals to resist oppression and tyranny. Multitudes of the human race really believe themselves to be the property of a small number of men who oppress them.

Such is the fatal progress of that original error which imposture has either produced or kept up in the mind of man. May true knowledge revive those rights of reasonable beings, which to be recovered, need only to be felt ! Sages of the earth, philosophers of every nation, it is yours alone to make laws, by pointing out these rights to your fellow-citizens. Take the glorious resolution to in-



fruct your fellow-creatures, and be assured, that if truth is longer in diffusing and establishing itself than error, yet its empire is more solid and lasting. Error passeth away, but truth remains. Mankind, allured by the expectation of happiness, the road to which you will show them, will listen to you with attention. Excite a sense of shame in the breasts of those numerous hireling slaves, who are always ready, at the command of their masters, to destroy their fellow-citizens. Rouse all the powers of human nature to oppose this subversion of social laws. Teach mankind that liberty is the institution of God; authority that of man. Expose those mysterious arts which hold the world in chains and darkness: let the people be sensible how far their credulity has been imposed upon; let them re-assume, with one accord, the use of their faculties, and vindicate the honour of the human race.

Beside the natives, the Portuguese found Mohammedans in India, some of whom came from the borders of Africa. Most of them were descendents of the Arabs, who had either settled here, or made incursions. They had possessed themselves of all the countries as far as the Indus, by the force of arms. The most enterprising among them had afterwards passed this river, and penetrated by degrees as far as the extremities of the east. On this immense continent they became the factors of Arabia and Egypt, and were treated with distinguished respect by all the sovereigns who wished to keep up an intercourse with these countries. Here they multiplied exceedingly; for as their religion allowed polygamy, they married in every place where they made any stay.

Their success was still more rapid and lasting in the islands that lie scattered in this ocean. The want of commerce procured them the best reception both from princes and their subjects. They soon rose to the highest dignities in these petty states, and became the arbiters of government. They took advantage of the superiority of their knowledge, and the support they received from their country, to establish an universal dominion. The despots and their vassals, in order to ingratiate themselves with them, abandoned a religion to which they had no great attachment, for new opinions which were to procure them some advantages. This sacrifice was the less

difficult for them, as the preachers of the Koran made no scruple of mixing ancient superstitions among those they wished to establish.

These Mohammedan Arabs, who were apostles and merchants at the same time, had already propagated their religion by purchasing a great number of slaves, to whom, after they had been circumcised and instructed in their doctrine, they gave their freedom; but as a certain pride prevented them from mixing their blood with that of these freedmen, the latter have in process of time become a distinct people, inhabiting the coast of the Indian peninsula from Goa to Madras. They understand neither the Persian, the Arabian, nor the Moorish language, and confine themselves to that of the countries in which they live. Their religion is a species of Mohammedanism extremely corrupted by Indian superstitions. On the coast of Coromandel, where they are known by the name of Coolies, they are brokers, secretaries, merchants, and sailors; and on the Malabar coast, where they are called Pooliahs, they exercise the same professions, though with less credit; for their avaricious, false, and sanguinary characters occasion a general mistrust.

INDOSTAN, which has since been almost entirely reduced by war under a foreign yoke, was, at the arrival of the Portuguese, divided between the kings of Cambaya, Delhi, Bijnagar, Narzingua, and Calicut, each of which reckoned several sovereigns, more or less powerful, among their tributaries. The last of these monarchs, who is better known by the name of Zamorin, which answers to that of emperor, than by the name of his capital city, possessed the most maritime states, and his empire extended over all the Malabar.

*Conduct of the  
Portuguese on  
Malabar coast.*

• There is an ancient tradition, that when the Arabs began to establish themselves in India in the eight century, the king of Malabar was so highly pleased with their religion, that he not only embraced the Mohammedan faith, but also resolved to end his days at Mecca. Calicut, the place where he embarked, attracted so much the notice and respect of the Moors, that they insensibly acquired the habit of carrying their ships there. This port,

however inconvenient and dangerous it was, became, from the mere effect of this superstition, the richest staple of these countries. Precious stones, pearls, amber, ivory, china-ware, gold and silver, silks and cottons, indigo, sugar, spices, valuable woods, perfumes, beautiful varnishes, and whatever adds to the luxuries of life, were brought there from all parts of the east. Some of these rich commodities came by sea; but as navigation was neither so safe, nor pursued with so much spirit as it hath been since, a great part of them was conveyed by land on the backs of oxen and elephants.

Gama, informed of these particulars at Melinda, where he touched, took an able pilot from thence to conduct him to that port in which commerce was the most flourishing. Here he fortunately met with a Moor of Tunis, who understood the Portuguese language, and who having been an astonished witness of the exploits of these people on the coast of Barbary, had conceived an attachment for them, which rose superior to his prejudices. This predilection engaged the Moor to exert himself to the utmost of his power in the service of these people, who placed an implicit confidence in him. He procured Gama an audience of the zamorin, who proposed an alliance and a treaty of commerce with the king his master. This was upon the point of being concluded, when the musselmen found means to excite suspicions against a rival power, whose courage, activity, and knowledge they dreaded. The reports they made to him of the ambition and restless spirit of the Portuguese, made such an impression on the mind of the prince, that he resolved to destroy those adventurers to whom he had just before given so favourable a reception.

Gama, apprized of this change by his faithful guide, sent his brother back to the fleet, with the following instructions: "If you should hear that I am thrown into prison, or put to death, I forbid you, as your commander, either to come to my assistance, or avenge my death; set sail immediately, and inform the king of the particulars of our voyage."

Fortunately the Portuguese were not reduced to these extremities. The zamorin, however desirous, did not dare to carry his design into execution; and the admiral

was allowed to return to his fleet. After making some well-timed reprisals, which procured a restitution of the merchandise and of the hostages he had left in Calicut, he sailed for Europe.

It is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at Lisbon on his return. The inhabitants beheld themselves on the point of establishing the richest commerce in the world, and being as much addicted to superstition as to avarice, flattered themselves at the same time that they should propagate their religion, either by persuasion, or by the force of arms. The popes, who omitted no opportunity of confirming their opinion of their supreme authority upon earth, gave the Portuguese all the coasts they should discover in the east, and inspired this little state with all the folly of conquest.

Numbers were eager to embark on board the new fleet that was fitted out for the expedition to India. Thirteen vessels that sailed from the Tagus, under the command of Alvares Cabral, arrived at Calicut, and restored some of the zamorin's subjects, whom Gama had carried away with him. These Indians spoke in the most favourable terms of the treatment they had received ; but it was a long time before the zamorin was reconciled to the Portuguese ; the Moorish party prevailed, and the people of Calicut, seduced by their intrigues, massacred fifty of the adventurers. Cabral, in revenge, burnt all the Arabian vessels in the harbour, cannonaded the town, and then sailed first to Cochin, and afterwards to Cananor.

The kings of both these towns gave him spices, offered him gold and silver, and proposed an alliance with him against the zamorin, to whom they were tributaries. The kings of Onor, Culan, and several other princes made the same overtures ; flattering themselves that they should all be relieved from the tribute they paid to the zamorin, that they should extend the frontiers of their dominions, and see their harbours crowded with the spoils of Asia. This general infatuation procured to the Portuguese so great an ascendant over the whole country of Malabar, that wherever they appeared they gave the law. No sovereign was suffered to enter into an alliance with them, unless he would acknowledge himself dependent on the court of Lisbon, give leave that a citadel should be built

in his capital, and sell his merchandise at the price fixed by the buyer. The foreign merchant was obliged to wait till the Portuguese had completed their lading; and no person was suffered to navigate these seas without producing passports from them. The wars in which they were unavoidably engaged, gave little interruption to their trade; with a small number of men they defeated numerous armies; their enemies met with them every where, and always fled before them; and, in a short time, the ships of the Moors, of the zamorin and his dependants, no longer dared to make their appearance.

The Portuguese, thus become the conquerors of the east, were perpetually sending rich cargoes to their own country, which resounded with the fame of their exploits. The port of Lisbon gradually became the resort of all the traders in Europe, and the grand mart of Indian commodities; for the Portuguese, who brought them immediately from India, sold them at a lower rate than the merchants of other nations.

To secure and extend these advantages, it became necessary to call in the aid of reflection, to correct and strengthen what had hitherto been the offspring of chance, of a singular intrepidity, and a happy concurrence of circumstances. It was necessary to establish a system of power and commerce, which at the same time that it was extensive enough to take in all objects, should be so well connected, that all the parts of the grand edifice intended to be raised, should mutually strengthen each other. Notwithstanding the information the court of Lisbon had received from the accounts transmitted from India, and the testimony of those who had hitherto been intrusted with the management of its interests in that quarter; it wisely reposed all its confidence in Alphonso Albuquerque, the most discerning of all the Portuguese who had visited Asia.

The new viceroy acquitted himself beyond expectation: he found it necessary that Portugal should have a settlement which might easily be defended, where there was a good harbour and a wholesome air, and where the Portuguese might refresh themselves, after the fatigues of their passage from Europe. With this view he cast his

eyes upon Goa, which he foresaw would be an important acquisition to Lisbon.

GOA, which rises in the form of an amphitheatre, is situated near the middle of the coast of Malabar, upon an island separated from the continent by the two branches of a river, which issuing from the Balagate mountains, falls into the sea at the distance of three leagues from the city, after having formed under its walls one of the finest harbours in the world. Numerous canals formed entirely by the hand of nature, thick woods with very good roads through them, meadows enamelled with an infinite variety of flowers, villas in the most pleasing situations; all contribute to render this a delightful island, the circumference of which may be about ten leagues; and the land exhibits an agreeable variety of valleys and rising grounds. Before the entrance into the road, we observe the two peninsulas of Salfette and Barda, which serve the double purposes of defence and shelter to the city. They are guarded by forts lined with artillery, where all ships are obliged to stop before they come to an anchor in the harbour.

Goa, though not so considerable at that time as it has been since, was looked upon as the most advantageous post in India. It belonged to the king of the Decan; but Idalcan, who was intrusted with the government of it, had assumed an independency, and endeavoured to extend his power in Malabar. While this usurper was pursuing his schemes on the continent, Albuquerque appeared before the gates of Goa, took the city by storm, and acquired this valuable advantage with very little loss.

Idalcan, informed of the loss he had sustained, did not hesitate a moment what measures he should take. In conjunction even with the Indians, his enemies, who were almost as much interelled in this matter as himself, he marched towards the capital, with a degree of expedition never before known in that country. The Portuguese having no firm footing there, and finding themselves unable to preserve their conquest, retreated to their ships, which kept their station in the harbour, and sent to Cochin for a reinforcement. While they were waiting for

it, their provisions failed. Idalcan offered them a supply, giving them to understand, "that he chose to conquer by arms, and not by famine." It was customary at that time, in the Indian wars, for the armies to suffer provisions to be carried to their enemies. Albuquerque rejected the offer made him, with this reply, "that he would receive no presents from Idalcan till they were friends." The succour he hourly expected never arrived.

This disappointment determined him to retreat, and to postpone the execution of his darling project to a more favourable opportunity, which presented itself a few months after. Idalcan being obliged to take the field again to preserve his dominions from absolute destruction, Albuquerque made a sudden attack upon Goa, which he carried by storm, and fortified himself in the place. As the harbour of Calicut was good for nothing, and ceased to be frequented by the Arabian vessels, all its trade and riches were transferred to this city, which became the metropolis of all the Portuguese settlements in India.

The natives of the country were too weak, too dispirited, and too much at variance, to put a stop to the success of this enterprising nation. Nothing remained to be done but to guard against the Egyptians; nor was the least precaution either omitted or neglected.

*Manner in which the Europeans carried on trade with India before the Portuguese had doubled the Cape of Good Hope.*

EGYPT, which is considered as the parent of all historical antiquities, the source of policy, and the nursery of arts and sciences, after having remained for ages in a state of separation from the rest of the world, who were held in contempt by this wise country, understood and practised navigation. The inhabitants had long neglected the Mediterranean, where they did not certainly expect any great advantages, and directed their course towards the Indian Ocean, which was the true channel of wealth.

Struck with the situation of this country between two seas, one of which opens the road to the east, and the other to the west, Alexander formed the design of fixing the seat of his empire in Egypt, and of making it the

centre of trade to the whole world. This prince who had more discernment than any other conqueror, saw that if it were possible to form an union between his present and future acquisitions, he must make choice of a country which nature seems to have placed, as it were, in contact with Africa and Asia, to connect them with Europe. The premature death of the greatest commander that history and fable have held up to the admiration of mankind, would for ever have annihilated these vast projects, had they not been in part pursued by Ptolemy, one of his lieutenants, who, upon the division of the most magnificent spoil ever known, claimed Egypt for his share.

In the reign of this new sovereign and his immediate successors, commerce made prodigious improvements. Alexandria was the mart of the merchandize that came from India, and the port of Berenice on the Red sea was put into a state fit to receive them. In order to facilitate the communication between the two cities, a canal was digged, which issued from one of the branches of the Nile, and discharged itself into the Arabian Gulf. By the skilful management of several streams, and by a great number of sluices constructed with ingenuity, the canal was extended to the length of fifty leagues; its breadth was five and twenty toises, and its depth was made sufficient for the ships it was intended to bear. This magnificent work, for some philosophical reasons, the detail of which would take up too much of our time, was not attended with those advantages that were expected from it; so that it fell to ruin imperceptibly.

The government attempted, by every possible means, to supply the want of it. In the midst of those barren and parched-up deserts through which it was necessary to pass, different inns were established, and repositories of water formed, where the travellers with their caravans refreshed themselves and their camels.

A writer, who has entered deeply into this subject, and whose accounts we follow, tells us, that some of the numerous vessels that were built in consequence of these connections, traded only in the gulf with the Arabians and Abyssinians. Among those which ventured out into the main ocean, some sailed southward to the right along



the eastern coasts of Africa, as far as the island of Madagascar; while others, steering to the left towards the Persian Gulf, went even as far as the Euphrates, to trade with the people on its banks, particularly with the Greeks, whom Alexander had brought there with him in his expeditions. Others, grown still more enterprising from the hopes of gain, penetrated as far as the mouths of the Indus, traversed the coast of Malabar, and touched at the island of Ceylon, known to the ancients by the name of Taprobane. A very small number passed through the Coromandel to go up the river Ganges, as far as Polybotra, a town the most celebrated in India on account of its riches. Thus industry proceeded by gradual advances, from one river or coast to another, to appropriate the productions of those countries that abound most in fruits, flowers, perfumes, precious stones, and all the delicacies of voluptuous luxury.

The boats made use of in these expeditions were long and flat, not unlike those that are seen upon the Nile. Before the invention of the compass, in consequence of which larger vessels, carrying more sail, were fitted out for the main ocean, it was necessary to row close to the shore, and to follow the windings of the coast from one point of land to another. The sides of the ships were also made less, in order to weaken the power of the wind over them; and the ships were more shallow, lest they should strike against rocks, sands, or shallows. Thus a voyage, not so long by one-third as those which are now performed in less than six months, sometimes lasted five years or more. The deficiency of the ships in size, was then supplied by numbers; and the disadvantages of slow sailing were compensated by the frequent fleets that were fitted out.

The Egyptians exported to India the same articles that have been carried there ever since, to wit, woollen manufactures, iron, lead, copper, some small pieces of workmanship in glass and silver, in exchange for ivory, ebony, tortoise-shell, white and printed linens, silks, pearls, precious stones, cinnamon, spices, and particularly frankincense; which was a perfume the most in esteem, from its being used in divine worship, and contributing to the gratification of princes. It sold at so high a price, that the

merchants adulterated under pretence of improving it. So apprehensive is avarice of being defrauded by poverty, that the workmen who were employed in making it were naked, having only a girdle about their loins, the ends of which were sealed by the proprietor of the manufacture.

All the seafaring and trading nations in the Mediterranean resorted to the ports of Egypt to purchase the productions of India. When Carthage and Corinth became the victims of the vices introduced by their opulence, the Egyptians were themselves obliged to export the riches with which these cities formerly loaded their own vessels. As their maritime power increased, they extended their navigation as far as Cadiz. They could scarcely supply the demands of Rome, the luxury of which kept pace with its conquests; at the same time that the Egyptians themselves were arrived at such a pitch of extravagance, that the accounts given of it have the air of romance. Cleopatra, with whom their empire and history expired, was as profuse as she was libidinous. But notwithstanding these incredible expences, the advantages they derived from the Indian trade were so great, that, after they were subdued and plundered, lands, provisions, and merchandise, bore double the price at Rome. If Pliny may be credited, the conqueror, by reinstating the conquered in this source of opulence, which was calculated rather to flatter their vanity than to aggrandise their power, gained twenty thousand per cent. Though it be evident that this calculation is exaggerated, we may from thence form a conjecture of the profits that must have been gained in those distant ages, when the Indians were not so well acquainted with their own interest.

While the Romans had virtue enough to preserve the power acquired by their ancestors, Egypt contributed greatly to support the dignity of the empire by the riches it poured into it from India. But the fullness of luxury, like the corpulency of the body, is a symptom of approaching decay. This vast empire sunk under its own weight, and, like levers of wood or metal, whose excessive length contributes to their weakness, it broke, and was divided into two immense parts.

Egypt was annexed to the eastern empire, which lasted

longer than the western, because it was not attacked so early, or with so much vigour. If riches could have supplied the place of courage, its situation and resources would even have made it invincible. But the inhabitants of this empire had nothing except stratagem to oppose against an enemy, who, to the enthusiasm of a new religion, joined all the strength of an uncivilized people. A torrent, the swell of which was thus increasing from the ravages it made, was not to be stopped by so slight a barrier. In the seventh century it swept away several provinces, and Egypt among the rest; which, after having been one of the principal empires of antiquity, and the model of all modern monarchies, was at length destined to sink into that state of languor and oblivion, in which it remains to this day.

The Greeks comforted themselves under this misfortune, on finding that the wars of the Saracens had diverted the stream of the Indian commerce from Alexandria to Constantinople, by two channels already well known. One of these was the Euxine or Black sea, where it was usual to embark to go up the Phasis; at first upon large vessels, and afterwards upon smaller ones, which sailed as far as Serapanna; from whence, in four or five days, the merchants conveyed their commodities by land-carriage to the river Cyrus, which falls into the Caspian sea. Having crossed this tempestuous ocean, they arrived at the mouth of the Oxus, which extended almost as far as the source of the Indus, and from whence they returned the same way, laden with the treasures of Asia. Such was one of the means of communication between this continent, always naturally rich, and that of Europe, which was then poor, and ravaged by its own inhabitants.

The other channel of communication was more simple. The Indian vessels, sailing from different coasts, passed the Persian Gulf, and deposited their cargoes on the banks of the Euphrates, from whence they were carried in a day or two to Palmyra, and were sent off to the coasts of Syria from that city; which undoubtedly owed its origin to the idea of its serving for that kind of staple, established in one of those very uncommon parts of Arabia, where trees, water, and a soil susceptible of cultivation, are to

be found. This city, though situated between the two great empires of the Romans and Parthians, was still for a long time allowed to remain neuter. It was at length subdued by Trajan, who did not withdraw any of its riches from it. It was even during the course of the hundred and fifty years of its being a Roman colony, that those temples, porticos, and palaces, were raised within its walls, after the model of the Greek architecture; and the ruins of which, so accurately delineated, have lately excited so much of our admiration and astonishment. The prosperities of this celebrated city became fatal to it, since they determined the queen to attempt to throw off an allegiance which was not oppressive: it was utterly ruined by Aurelian. This emperor, it is true, afterwards permitted a few citizens, who had survived the calamities of their country, to restore it, and to live there: but it is a more easy matter to destroy than to rebuild. This seat of commerce, of arts, and of the grandeur of Zenobia, became gradually an obscure place, a fortress of little consequence, and at length a miserable village, consisting of thirty or forty huts, built in the spacious circuit of a public edifice formerly of great magnificence.

Palmyra being destroyed, the caravans, after some fluctuations, constantly took the road of Aleppo; which, by means of the harbour of Alexandretta, turned the current of wealth to Constantinople, that was at length become the general mart of all the productions of India.

This single advantage might have retarded the fall of the empire, and, perhaps, have restored it to its ancient grandeur: but that grandeur had been acquired by arms, by virtues, and by frugal manners; and it was now destitute of all those means of maintaining its prosperity. The Greeks, corrupted by the prodigious accession of wealth, which an exclusive commerce poured in upon them almost without any efforts or activity of their own, abandoned themselves to that indolent and effeminate way of life, which is infallibly brought on by luxury; they gave up their time to the frivolous pleasures of the brilliant and voluptuous arts, and to futile, obscure, and sophistical disquisitions on matters of taste and sentiment, and even of religion and politics. They could suffer themselves to be oppressed, but knew not how to assert their

right to be properly governed; and alternately made their court to tyrants by the most abject adulation, or irritated them by a faint resistance. When the emperors had bought these people, they sold them to all the monopolizers who aimed at enriching themselves by the ruin of the state. The government, still more corrupted than its subjects, suffered its navy to decay, and placed its whole dependence on the treaties it entered into with the strangers, whose ships frequented its ports. The Italians had insensibly engrossed the carrying trade, which the Greeks had for a long time kept in their own hands. This branch of business, which consists more in activity than profit, was doubly useful to a trading nation, whose chief riches arise from maintaining their vigour by labour. Indolence hastened the destruction of Constantinople, which was pressed and surrounded on all sides by the conquests of the Turks. The Genoese fell into the precipice which their perfidy and avarice had digged for them. Mohamed the Second drove them from Caffa, to which place they had, of late years, drawn the greatest part of the Asiatic trade.

The Venetians did not wait for this event to give them an opportunity of reviving their connections with Egypt. They had experienced more indulgence than they expected from a government established since the last crusades, and nearly resembling that of Algiers. The Mamme-lucs, who at the time of these wars had taken possession of a throne of which they had hitherto been the support, were, for the most part, slaves brought from Circassia in their infancy, and trained up early to a military life. The supreme authority was vested in a chief and a council composed of four-and-twenty principal persons. This military corps, which ease would unavoidably have enervated, was recruited every year by a multitude of bold adventurers, who flocked from all parts, with a view of making their fortune. These greedy people were prevailed upon, by a sum of money and promises, to consent that their country should be made the mart of Indian merchandise; and were thus bribed into a measure, which the political interest of their state would always have required them to adopt. The inhabitants of Pisa and Florence, of Catalonia and Genoa, received some benefit

from this change ; but it was of signal advantage to the Venetians, by whose management it was effected. Affairs were in this situation when the Portuguese made their appearance in India.

This great event, and the consequences that immediately followed it, occasioned much uneasiness at Venice. This republic, so celebrated for its wisdom, had lately been disconcerted by a league which it could not oppose, and which it certainly had no reason to foresee. Several princes, of different interests, who were rivals in power, and had pretensions of an opposite nature, united, in defiance of all the rules of justice and policy, to destroy a state which had not given the least umbrage to any of them ; and even Lewis the XII, who, of all these princes, was the most interested in the preservation of Venice, brought it to the brink of ruin by the victory of Aignadelle. The quarrels which must necessarily arise among such allies, joined to the prudence of the republic, saved it from this danger, which, though more imminent in appearance, was, in fact, not so great nor so immediate, as that it was now exposed to by the discovery of a passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

Venice soon perceived that her commerce, and consequently her power, was on the point of being transferred to the Portuguese. Every expedient was tried that an able administration could suggest. Some of the skilful emissaries, which the state took care to retain and employ dexterously in all places, persuaded the Arabs settled in their country, and those that were dispersed over India, or the eastern coast of Africa, that, as their interest was equally concerned with that of Venice, they ought to unite with her against a nation which had made itself mistress of the common source of their riches.

- The rumour of this league reached the sultan of Egypt, whose attention was already awakened by the misfortune he felt, as well as those he foresaw. The customs, which constituted a principal branch of his revenue, and by which five per cent was levied on the importation and ten on the exportation of Indian goods, began to bring in little or nothing. The frequent bankruptcies, which were the necessary consequence of the embarrassment of affairs, exasperated mens minds against the government, which is always re-

sponsible to the people for the calamities they endure. The militia, which was ill paid, fearing that their subsistence would be still more precarious, raised mutinies, which are more to be dreaded in the decline of a state, than in the time of its prosperity. Egypt was equally a sufferer by the trade which the Portuguese themselves carried on, as by the interruption which its own commerce experienced from their acts of violence.

The Egyptians might have extricated themselves from these misfortunes by fitting out a fleet; but the Red sea afforded no materials for this purpose. The Venetians removed this obstacle, by sending wood and other materials to Alexandria, which were conveyed by the Nile to Cairo, from whence they were carried by camels to Suez. In the year 1508, four large vessels, one galleon, two galleys, and three galliots, were dispatched from this celebrated port to India.

*The Portuguese  
make themselves  
masters of the  
Red sea.*

THE Portuguese, who foresaw this confederacy, had, the preceding year, laid a scheme to prevent it, by making themselves masters of the Red sea.

They were certain, that, with this advantage, they should have nothing to fear from this connection, nor from the combined forces of Egypt and Arabia. With this view, they formed a plan to seize upon the island of Socotora, which is situated at the distance of a hundred and eighty leagues from the Straits of Babelmandel, which are formed by Cape Guardafeu on the African side, and by Cape Fartack on the side of Arabia.

Another advantage was to arise to them from this conquest, that of being possessed of the most perfect aloes that have ever been known.

The plant which produces this juice, and gives it its name, is furnished with a number of thick leaves; from the midst of which there issues a very beautiful cluster of red flowers. These leaves are gathered, and the fluid they contain is extracted by a slight degree of pressure. This fluid being cleansed of its grosser particles, and inspissated by the heat of the sun, form the succotrine aloes which is easily distinguished from the other kinds, by its

yellow colour, its brightness, its transparency, its powerful smell, and its bitter and aromatic taste.

Tristan d'Acunha sailed from Portugal with a considerable armament, to attack this island. Upon his landing, he was opposed by Ibrahim, son of the king of the people of Fartack, who was sovereign of part of Arabia and Socotora. This young prince was killed in the engagement; the Portuguese besieged the only town that was in the island, and carried it by storm, though it was defended to the last extremity by a garrison superior in number to their small army. The soldiers that composed this garrison resolved not to survive the son of their sovereign, refused to capitulate, and were all, to the last man, put to the sword. The intrepidity of d'Acunha's troops was not to be damped by these exertions of courage.

This successful enterprise was not attended with the advantages that were expected from it. It was found that the island was barren, that it had no port, and that the ships which came from the Red sea never touched there, though they could not enter the gulf without taking an observation of it. Accordingly, the Egyptian fleet found a safe passage into the Indian Ocean, where it joined that of Cambaya. These united armaments were successful against the Portuguese, who were considerably weakened by the great number of vessels they had lately dispatched with merchandise to Europe. This triumph, however, did not last long; the conquered party were supplied with reinforcements, and regained their superiority, which they ever after preserved. The armaments which continued to come from Egypt, were always beaten and dispersed by the small Portuguese squadrons that cruized at the entrance of the gulf.

As these skirmishes, however, kept up a constant alarm, and occasioned some expence, Albuquerque thought it incumbent on him to put an end to them by the destruction of Suez: a project which was thwarted by a variety of obstacles.

The Red sea, which separates Arabia from Upper Ethiopia and part of Egypt, is three hundred and fifty leagues in length, and forty in breadth. As there is no river falling into it of sufficient force to counteract the in-



fluence of the tide, it is more affected by the motions of the great ocean, than any of the inland seas nearly in the same latitude. It is not much exposed to tempests; the winds usually blow from north and south, and being periodical, like the monsoons in India, invariably determine the season of sailing into or out of this sea. It may be divided into three parts; the middle division is clear and navigable at all times, its depth being from twenty-five to sixty fathoms. The other two divisions, which lie nearer the land, though they abound in shoals, are more frequented by the neighbouring nations; who, being obliged to keep close to the shore, on account of the smallness of their vessels, never launch out into the principal channel, unless they expect a squall of wind. The difficulty, not to say impossibility, of landing in the harbours on this coast, makes the navigation dangerous for vessels of large burthen: not to mention the great number of desert islands they meet with in their passage, which are barren, and afford no supply of fresh water.

Albuquerque, notwithstanding his abilities, experience, and resolution, could not surmount so many difficulties. After entering a considerable way into the Red sea, he was obliged to return with his fleet, which had suffered perpetual hardships, and been exposed to the greatest dangers. He was prompted, by a restless and cruel spirit of enterprise, to employ methods for the accomplishment of his designs, which, though of a still bolder cast, he thought could not fail of success. He endeavoured to persuade the emperor of Ethiopia, who solicited the protection of Portugal, to turn the course of the Nile, so as to open a passage for him into the Red sea. Egypt would then have become, in a great measure, uninhabitable, or at least unfit for commerce. In the mean time, he proposed to transport into Arabia, by the gulf of Persia, three or four hundred horse, which, he thought, would be sufficient to plunder Medina and Mecca. He imagined, that by so bold an expedition, he should strike terror into the Mohammedans, and put a stop to that prodigious concourse of pilgrims which was the chief support of a trade he wished totally to extirpate.

Other enterprises, of a less hazardous nature, and attended with more immediate advantage, led him to post-

pone the ruin of a power, the influence of which, as a rival, was the only circumstance necessary to be guarded against at the present juncture. The conquest of Egypt by the Turks, a few years after, made it requisite to act with the greater precaution. Men of genius, whose minds were capable of pursuing the series of events which had preceded and followed the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, and of forming deep conjectures concerning the revolutions which this new track of navigation must necessarily prevent, could not help considering this remarkable transaction as the most important æra in the history of the world.

EUROPE had but just begun to recover its strength, and to shake off the yoke of slavery, which had disgraced its inhabitants from the time of the Roman conquests down to the institution of the feudal laws. Innumerable tyrants, who kept multitudes in a state of oppression and slavery, had been ruined by the folly of the crusades. To defray the expences of these romantic expeditions, they had been obliged to sell their lands and castles; and, for a pecuniary consideration, to allow their vassals some privileges, which at length almost reinstated them in the order of human beings. From that time, the right of property began to be introduced among individuals, and gave them that kind of independence, without which, property itself is a mere illusion. Thus the first dawnings of liberty in Europe were, however unexpectedly, owing to the crusades; and the rage of conquest for once contributed to the happiness of mankind.

*Dangers from which Europe has been preserved by the dominion of the Portuguese over the Red sea.*

If Vasco de Gama had not made his discoveries, the spirit of liberty would have been again extinguished, and, probably, without hopes of a revival. The Turks were upon the point of expelling those savage nations, who, pouring from the extremities of the globe, had driven out the Romans, to become, like them, the scourges of human kind; and our barbarous institutions would have been supplanted by oppressions still more intolerable. This must inevitably have been the case, if the savage con-

querors of Egypt had not been repulsed by the Portuguese, in their several expeditions to India. Their possession of the riches of Asia would have secured their claim to those of Europe. As the trade of the whole world would have been in their hands, they must consequently have had the greatest maritime force that ever had been known. What opposition could our continent then have made to the progress of a people whose religion and policy equally inspired them with the idea of conquest?

Dissensions were then prevailing in England, for the recovery of its liberties; France was contending for the interests of its sovereigns; Germany for those of its religion; and Italy was employed in adjusting the mutual claims of a tyrant and an impostor. Europe, overrun with fanatics and armies, resembled a sick person, who, falling into a delirium, in the paroxysm of madness, opens his veins, till he faints with the loss of blood and spirits. In this state of weakness and anarchy, it was ill prepared to resist the inroads of the Turks.

As the calm which succeeds the tempestuous season of civil wars makes a nation formidable to its neighbours; so the factions which divide it, as certainly expose it to ravage and oppression. The depraved morals of the clergy would have been a further encouragement to the introduction of a new worship; and we should have been condemned to a state of slavery without any hopes of relief. There is not one, indeed, among all the political and religious systems that oppress mankind, which allows so little scope to liberty as that of the musselmens. Throughout almost all Europe, a religion foreign to government, and introduced without its patronage; rules of morality dispersed without order or precision in obscure writings, capable of an endless variety of interpretations; authority engrossed by priests and princes, who are perpetually contesting their right to rule over their fellow-creatures; political and civil institutions daily formed in contradiction to the prevailing religion, which condemns ambition and inequality of rank; a turbulent and enterprising administration, which, in order to tyrannize with a higher hand, is perpetually setting one part of the state at variance with the other: all these principles of discord

must necessarily keep the minds of men in constant agitation. Is it surprising that on the view of this tumultuous scene, nature, alarmed, should rise up in our hearts, and cry out, "is man born free?"

But when men once became slaves to a religion which consecrates tyranny by establishing the throne upon the altar; which seems to check the sallies of ambition by encouraging voluptuousness; and cherishes a spirit of indolence, by forbidding the exercise of the understanding: there is no reason to hope for any considerable revolutions. Thus the Turks, who frequently strangle their master, have never entertained a thought of changing their government. This is an idea beyond the reach of minds enervated and corrupted like theirs. The whole world would, therefore, have lost its liberty, had not the most superstitious, and, perhaps, the most enslaved nation in Christendom checked the progress of the fanaticism of the Mohammedans, and put a stop to the career of their victories, by depriving them of those sources of wealth which were necessary to the success of their enterprises. Albuquerque went still further; not satisfied with having taken effectual measures to prevent any vessel from passing from the Arabian sea to the Indian Ocean, he attempted to acquire the command of the Persian Gulf.

At the mouth of the strait of Mocandon, which leads into the Persian Gulf, stands the island of Gombroon. In the eleventh century, an Arabian conqueror built upon this barren rock the city of Ormus, which afterwards became the capital of an empire, comprehending a considerable part of Arabia on one side, and of Persia on the other. Ormus had two good harbours, and was large and well fortified; its riches and strength were entirely owing to its situation. It was the centre of trade between Persia and India; which was very considerable, at a time when the Persians conveyed most of the merchandise brought from Asia to Europe, through the ports of Syria or Caffa. In the seasons which permitted the foreign merchants to come there, Ormus afforded a more splendid and agreeable scene than any city in the east. Persons from all parts of

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the globe exchanged their commodities, and transacted their business there, with an air of politeness and attention which are seldom seen in other places of trade.

These manners were introduced by the merchants belonging to the port, who engaged foreigners to imitate their affability. Their address, the regularity of their police, and the variety of entertainments which their city afforded, joined to the interests of commerce, invited merchants to make it a place of resort. The streets were covered with mats, and in some places with carpets; and the linen awnings which were suspended from the tops of the houses, prevented any inconvenience from the heat of the sun. Indian cabinets ornamented with gilded vases, or china filled with flowering shrubs, or aromatic plants, adorned their apartments. Camels laden with water were stationed in the public squares. Persian wines, perfumes, and all the delicacies of the table were furnished in the greatest abundance, and they had the music of the east in its highest perfection. Ormus was crowded with beautiful women from all parts of Asia, who were instructed from their infancy in all the arts of varying and heightening the pleasures of voluptuous love. In a word, universal opulence, an extensive commerce, a refined luxury, politeness in the men, and gallantry in the women, united all their attractions to make this city the seat of pleasure.

Albuquerque, on his arrival in India, began to ravage the coasts, and to plunder the towns that belonged to the jurisdiction of Ormus: though these inroads, which showed more of the robber than of the conqueror, were naturally repugnant to Albuquerque's character, he thought himself obliged to have recourse to them, in order to induce a power he was not in a condition to subdue by force, to submit voluntarily to the yoke he wanted to impose. As soon as he imagined the alarm was spread sufficiently to favour his design, he appeared before the capital, and summoned the king to acknowledge himself tributary to Portugal, as he was to Persia. This proposal was received in the manner it deserved. A fleet, composed of ships from Ormus, Arabia, and Persia, came to an engagement with Albuquerque's squadron, who, with five vessels destroyed the whole ar-

mament. The king, discouraged by his ill success, consented that the conqueror should erect a fort which might command the city and both its harbours.

Albuquerque, who knew the importance of seizing the present conjuncture, carried on the work with the utmost expedition. He laboured as hard as the meanest of his followers; but this spirit of activity could not prevent the enemy from taking notice of the smallness of his numbers. Atar, who, in consequence of the revolutions so frequent in the east, had been raised from the condition of a slave, to that of a prime minister, was ashamed of having sacrificed the state to a handful of adventurers. As his talent lay rather in the arts of policy than of war, he determined to repair the ill consequences of his timidity by stratagem. By the arts of insinuation and bribery, he succeeded so far in sowing dissensions among the Portuguese, and prejudicing them against their leader, that they were frequently ready to take arms against each other. This animosity, which increased every day, determined them to reembark at the instant they were informed that a plot was concerted to massacre them. Albuquerque, whose spirit rose superior to opposition and discontent, resolved to starve the place, and deprive it of succours, by cutting off all communication. It must certainly have fallen into his hands, had not three of his captains shamefully abandoned him, and gone off with their ships. To justify their desertion, they were guilty of still blacker perfidy, in accusing their general of the most atrocious crimes.

This treachery obliged Albuquerque to defer the execution of his design for some time, till he had all the national troops at his command. As soon as he was appointed viceroy, he appeared before Ormus, with so strong an armament, that a debauched court and an effeminate people, finding it in vain to make any resistance, were obliged to submit. The sovereign of Persia had the confidence to demand tribute of the conqueror. Albuquerque ordered some bullets, grenades, and sabres, to be produced to the envoy, telling him that this was the kind of tribute paid by the king of Portugal.

After this expedition, the power of the Portuguese was so firmly established in the Arabian and Persian

Gulfs, and on the Malabar coast, that they began to think of extending their conquests into the eastern parts of Asia.

*The Portuguese form a settlement at Ceylon.* THE island of Ceylon, which is eighty leagues long, and thirty at its greatest breadth, first presented itself to Albuquerque. In the most remote ages of antiquity, it was well known by the name of Taprobane. We have no accounts transmitted to us of the revolutions it has undergone. All that history relates worthy of remark is, that the laws were formerly holden in such respect there, that the monarch was under the same obligation of observing them as the meanest of his subjects. If he violated them, he was condemned to death; with this mark of distinction, however, that he did not suffer in an ignominious manner. He was denied all intercourse, all the comforts and supports of life: and, in this kind of excommunication, miserably ended his days.

If the people knew their own prerogatives, this custom, anciently observed in Ceylon, would still subsist in all parts of the earth; but while the subject only is amenable to the laws, whatever title he may give himself, he will be no more than a slave. The law is nothing, unless it be a sword acting indiscriminately upon the head of every individual, and striking off every thing that rises above the horizontal direction in which it moves. The law has no authority, unless that authority be extended over all without exception; for in the sight of the law, as in the sight of God, all men are equal. The punishment of an individual avenges only the infraction of the law; the punishment of the sovereign avenges the contempt of it. Who shall dare bid defiance to the law, if even the sovereign cannot do it with impunity? The remembrance of so great a lesson is perpetuated for ages, and excites a more salutary dread than the death of a thousand other criminals.

When the Portuguese landed in Ceylon, they found it well peopled, and inhabited by two nations, which differed from each other in their manners, their government, and their religion. The bedas, who were settled in the northern parts of the island, where the country was less

fertile, were distinguished into tribes, which considered themselves as so many families, headed by a chief, whose power was not absolute. They went almost naked, and, upon the whole, their manners and government were the same with that of the highlanders in Scotland. These tribes, which unite for the common defence, have always bravely fought for their liberty, and have never invaded that of their neighbours. Their religion is little known and it is uncertain whether they have any form of worship, they have little intercourse with strangers, keep a watchful eye over those who travel through the district they inhabit; treat them well, and send them away as soon as possible. This caution is partly owing to the jealousy the bedas entertain of their wives, which contributes to estrange them from all the world. They seem to have been the first inhabitants of the island.

The southern part is possessed by a more numerous and powerful people, called Cinglaffes. This nation is polite, in comparison of the other. They wear clothes, and live under an arbitrary government. They have a distinction of casts, as well as the Indians; but their religion is different. They acknowledge one supreme being, and in subordination to him, divinities of the second and third order; all which have their priests. Among the deities of the second order, particular honours are paid to Buddou, who descended upon earth to take upon himself the office of mediator between God and mankind. The priests of Buddou are persons of great consequence in Ceylon. They are never punishable by the prince, even for an attempt against his life. The Cinglaffes understand the art of war. They know how to take advantage of the natural security their mountains afford against the attacks of the Europeans, whom they have often defeated. Like all people who live in arbitrary states, they are deceitful, selfish, and full of compliment. They have two languages: one peculiar to the people, the other to the learned. Wherever this custom prevails, it furnishes priests and princes with a further opportunity of imposing upon mankind.

Both these nations enjoyed the benefits of the fruits, the corn, and the pasture, which abounded in the island. They had elephants without number; precious stones,



and the only kind of cinnamon that was ever esteemed. On the northern coast, and on the fishing coasts which border upon it, was carried on the greatest pearl fishery in the east. The harbours of Ceylon were the best in India, and its situation was superior to all its other advantages.

It should seem that it was the interest of the Portuguese to have placed all their strength in this island. It lies in the centre of the east; and is the passage that leads to the richest countries. It might have been well peopled and fortified with a small number of men, and at a very little expence. The numerous squadrons that might have been sent out from every port in the island would have kept all Asia in awe; and the ships that might have cruized in those latitudes, would easily have intercepted the trade of other nations.

The viceroy overlooked these advantages. He also neglected the coast of Coromandel, though richer than that of Malabar. The merchandise of the latter was of an inferior quality; it produced plenty of provisions, a small quantity of bad cinnamon, some pepper, and cardamom, a kind of spice much used by the eastern people. The coast of Coromandel furnished the finest cottons in the world. Its inhabitants, who for the most part were natives of the country, and had less intercourse with the Arabians and other nations, were the most humane and industrious of all the people in Indostan. To this we may add, that the passage along the coast of Coromandel, towards the north, leads to the mines of Golconda: and, moreover, this coast is admirably situated for the trade of Bengal and other countries.

Notwithstanding this, Albuquerque made no settlement there. The settlements of St. Thomas and Negapatan were not formed till afterwards. He knew that this coast was destitute of harbours, and inaccessible at certain periods of the year, when it would be impossible for the fleets to protect the colonies. In a word, he thought that when the Portuguese had made themselves masters of Ceylon, a conquest begun by his predecessor d'Almeyda, and afterwards completed, they might command the trade of Coromandel, if they got possession

of Malacca. He therefore determined to make the attempt.

THE country, of which Malacca is the capital city, is a narrow tract of land, about a hundred leagues in length. It joins to the continent towards the northern coast, where it borders on the state of Siam, or more properly the kingdom of Johor, which has been separated from it. The rest is surrounded by the sea, and divided from the island of Sumatra by a channel which is called the straits of Malacca.

Nature had amply provided for the happiness of the Malays, by placing them in a mild, healthy climate, where refreshing gales and cooling streams allay the fervour of the torrid zone; where the soil pours forth an abundance of delicious fruits to satisfy the wants of a savage life; and where it is capable of answering, by cultivation, all the necessary demands of society; where the trees wear an eternal verdure, and the flowers bloom in perpetual succession; where the most delicate and fragrant odours breathing from aromatic plants, perfume the air, and infuse a spirit of voluptuous delight into all living beings.

But while nature has done every thing in favour of the Malays, society has done them every possible injury. Such has been the influence of a tyrannical government, that the inhabitants of the happiest country in the universe have become remarkable for the ferocity of their manners. The feudal system, first planted among the rocks and woods of the north, had extended itself even to the forests and mild regions of the equator, where every thing conspires to promote the enjoyment of a long life of tranquillity, which can only be shortened by a too frequent and excessive indulgence in pleasures. This enslaved nation is under the dominion of an arbitrary prince, or rather of twenty tyrants his representatives. Thus the despotism of a sultan seems to extend its oppressive influence to multitudes, by being divided among a number of powerful vassals.

This turbulent and oppressive scene gave rise to an universal savageness of manners. In vain did heaven and

earth shower their blessings upon Malacca; these blessings only served to make its inhabitants ungrateful and unhappy. The masters let out their services, or rather those of their dependents, for hire, to the best bidder, regardless of the loss that agriculture would sustain for want of hands. They preferred a wandering and adventurous life, either by sea or land, to industry. This people had conquered a large archipelago, well known in the east by the name of the Malayan islands. The numerous colonies that were transplanted thither, carried with them their laws, their manners, their customs, and, what is something remarkable, the softest language in all Asia.

The situation of Malacca had, however, made it the most considerable market in India; its harbour was constantly crowded with vessels either from Japan, China, the Philippine and Molucca islands, and the adjacent part of the eastern coast; or from Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar, Persia, Arabia, and Africa. These merchants carried on a safe trade among themselves, or with the inhabitants: the passion of the Malays for plunder, had at length given way to advantages of a more certain nature than the precarious and doubtful success of piratical expeditions.

The Portuguese were desirous of having a share in the general commerce of Asia. At first they appeared at Malacca in the character of merchants; but their usurpations in India had rendered their designs so much suspected, and the animosity of the Arabians had circulated reports so much to their disadvantage, that measures were taken to destroy them. They fell into the snares that were laid for them; several of them were massacred, and others thrown into prison. Those who escaped got back to their ships, and retreated to the Malabar coast.

Though Albuquerque did not intend to wait for a rupture to afford him a pretence of seizing upon Malacca, he was not displeased at this incident, since it gave his enterprise an appearance of justice that might lessen the odium which such a step must naturally have drawn upon the Portuguese name. As an impression so favourable to his views might have been weakened by delay, he did not hesitate a moment to take his revenge. The enemy expected a

sudden blow ; and accordingly, when he appeared before the place, in the beginning of the year 1511, he found every thing in readiness to receive him.

But formidable as these preparations appeared, there was a still greater obstacle, which for some days damped the valour of the Christian general : his friend Araújo had been taken prisoner in the first expedition, and the enemy threatened to put him to death the moment the siege should begin. Albuquerque, who did not want sensibility, paused at the prospect of his friend's danger, when he received the following billet : " Think of nothing but the glory and advantage of Portugal ; if I cannot contribute towards your victory, at least let me not be the means of preventing it." The place was attacked and carried after several doubtful, bloody, and obstinate engagements. They found in it immense treasure, vast magazines, and whatever could contribute to the elegancies and pleasures of life ; and a fort was erected there to secure the conquest.

As the Portuguese contented themselves with the possession of the city, the inhabitants, who professed a kind of corrupt Mohammedism, and were unwilling to submit to their new masters, either retired into the inland parts, or dispersed themselves along the coast. Having lost the spirit of commerce, they relapsed into all the excesses of their violent character. These people never go without a poniard, which they call *crid*. The invention of this murderous weapon seems to have exhausted all the powers of their sanguinary genius. Nothing is more to be dreaded than such men armed with such an instrument. When they get on board a vessel, they stab all the crew at the time when no harm is suspected. Since their treachery has been known, all the Europeans take care never to employ a Malayan sailer ; but these barbarians, who always made it a rule to attack the weaker party, have now changed this ancient custom, and, animated by an unaccountable resolution to kill or be killed, come in boats with thirty men to board our vessels, and sometimes succeed in carrying them off : if they are repulsed, they have the satisfaction, at least, of having embued their hands in blood.

People who derive from nature such inflexible bravery,

may be exterminated, but cannot be subdued by force. They are only to be civilized by humane treatment, by the allurements of riches or liberty, by the influence of virtue and moderation, and by a mild government. They must be restored to their rights, or left to themselves, before we can hope to establish any intercourse with them. To attempt to reduce them by conquest, is, perhaps, the last method that should be tried, as it will only increase their abhorrence of a foreign yoke, and discourage them from entering into any social engagements. Nature has placed certain people in the midst of the ocean, like lions in the deserts, that they may enjoy their liberty. Tempests, sands, forests, mountains, and caverns, are the places of refuge and defence to all independent beings. Civilized nations should take care how they invade the rights, or rouse the spirits of islanders and savages : as they may be assured that they will become cruel and barbarous to no purpose ; that their ravages will make them detested ; and that disgrace and revenge are the only laurels they can expect to obtain.

After the reduction of Malacca, the kings of Siam, Pegu, and several others, alarmed at a conquest so fatal to their independence, sent ambassadors to congratulate Albuquerque, to make him an offer of their trade, and to desire an alliance with Portugal.

*Settlement of the Portuguese in the Molucca islands.*

Affairs being in this situation, a squadron was detached from the fleet to the Moluccas. These islands, which lie in the Indian Ocean near the equinoxial, are ten in number, including, as usual, those of Banda. The largest is not more than twelve leagues in circumference, and the others are much smaller.

This cluster of islands seems to have been thrown up by the sea ; and may with reason be supposed to be the effect of some subterraneous fire. Lofty mountains, the summits of which are lost in the clouds ; enormous rocks heaped one upon another ; horrid and deep caverns ; torrents which precipitate themselves with extreme violence ; volcanos, perpetually announcing impending destruction :

such are the phenomena that give rise to this idea, or assist in confirming it.

It is not known who were the first inhabitants of these islands; but it is certain that the Javans and the Malays have successively been in possession of them. At the beginning of the sixteenth century they were inhabited by a kind of savages, whose chiefs, though honoured with the title of kings, possessed only a limited authority, totally depending on the caprice of their subjects. They had, of late years, joined the superstitions of Mohammedism to those of paganism, which they had professed for a considerable time. Their indolence was excessive. Their only employment was hunting and fishing; and they were strangers to all kind of agriculture. They were encouraged in their inactivity by the advantages they derived from the cocoa tree.

The cocoa tree, which grows spontaneously in almost every part of India, is a tree of a very beautiful form, which rises to the height of forty, and more commonly sixty feet. It is fixed in the ground by a great number of slender and fibrous roots. Its trunk, which has a trifling bend towards the basis, is straight throughout the rest of its length, of a cylindrical form, of moderate thickness, and marked with several circular inequalities, formed by the basis of the leaves which have fallen off from it. Its wood is of so light and spongy a nature, that it is unfit for ship-timber, or for any building that requires solidity; and the boats which are made of it are brittle, and do not last long. The tuft is composed of ten or twelve pinnated leaves, tapered towards the top, very broad at their basis, and covered, in the infant state of the tree, with a kind of network, of which sieves are made. Their centre costa, which is twelve feet long, is deeply furrowed on its internal surface. The roofs of houses are covered in with these leaves; and they are used in making umbrellas, sails, and fishing-nets: the youngest of them may even serve instead of paper, and will receive the impression of characters marked with a pencil. From the midst of this tuft there arises a thick membranous spathe or sheath, convoluted, swelled out in the middle, and terminating in a point. When this is grown to a certain size, it opens on one side, and displays a very confi-

derable panicle, each stem of which bears two female, and a greater number of male flowers. The latter have a calix with six deep divisions, and as many stamina; in the former, a pistil is substituted to these stamina, and this becomes a fruit of an oval form, slightly triangular, and of more than six inches in diameter. The assemblage of several fruits upon the same panicle, is called a cluster; and the same tree yields successively several clusters in one year.

This fruit is covered with a bark consisting of filaments three fingers thick, and distinguished by the name of *kar*; of which some coarse stuffs and ropes for ships are made. Underneath it is a very hard nut, of the size and shape of a small melon: it has three holes at one of its extremities, and is fit for making small cups, and other domestic utensils. The pulp which lines the inside of this nut, supplies a wholesome kind of food, from which is expressed an oil very sweet, when fresh, and much used in India. But it contracts a bitter taste when it is kept long, and is then only proper for burning. The sediment that remains in the press, affords nourishment for cattle, poultry, and even the lower kind of people in times of scarcity. The centre of the nut is filled with a clear, refreshing, sweetish kind of liquid, which serves to quench the thirst of labouring people both at sea and land. In the old fruits this fluid disappears, and is succeeded by an almond, which soon fills up the cavity, and becomes fit for the propagation of the plant. In the centre of it is sometimes found a stony concretion, to which the Indians ascribe great virtues; they consider it is a pledge of success, and seldom fail to provide themselves with one, when they are going upon any enterprise.

The above mentioned advantages are not, however, the only ones that are derived from the *cocoa* tree. If the buds of the flowers be cut off before they are perfectly unfolded, a white liquor runs from them, which is received into a vessel fixed to their extremity; and is of a sweet taste, while it continues fresh. It afterwards turns sour, and makes good vinegar. When distilled in its highest perfection, it produces a strong brandy; and boiled with quicklime, yields a middling kind of sugar. The buds, from which this liquor has been drawn, necessarily become

abortive, and do not unfold themselves any further, because they have been deprived of that substance which was destined for the production and nourishment of the fruit.

Beside the cocoa tree, the Moluccas produce a singular kind of palm, which is called sago. This tree, which is common in the forests of these islands, differs from the former in having longer leaves, a less elevated trunk, and smaller fruits. The progress of its vegetation in the early stages is very slow. At first it is a mere shrub, thick set with thorns, which makes it difficult to come near it. But as soon as its stem is once formed, it rises, in a short time, to the height of thirty feet, is about six feet in circumference, and imperceptibly loses its thorns. The bark is an inch thick; and all the inside is filled with a sap which falls into meal. The tree, which seems to grow merely for the use of man, points out the meal by a fine white powder which covers its leaves, and is a certain indication of the maturity of the sago. It is then cut down to the root, and sawed into scantlings, which are divided into four quarters, for the purpose of extracting the sap or meal they contain. After this substance has been diluted in water, it is strained through a kind of sieve, which retains the grosser particles; the rest is thrown into earthen moulds, where it dries and hardens for some years. The Indians eat the sago diluted with water, and sometimes baked or boiled. Through a principle of humanity, they reserve the finest part of this meal for the aged and infirm. A jelly is sometimes made of it, which is white, and of a delicious flavour.

Temperate, independent, and averse from labour, these people had lived for ages upon the meal of the sago and the milk of the cocoa, when the Chinese, landing by accident at the Moluccas, discovered the clove and the nutmeg, with which valuable spices the ancients were entirely unacquainted. They were soon admired all over India, from whence they were conveyed to Persia and Europe. The Arabians, who at that time engrossed almost all the trade of the universe, did not overlook so lucrative a part of it. They repaired in crowds to these celebrated islands, the productions of which they had already monopolized, when the Portuguese, who pursued them every where, came and deprived them of this branch of trade.



Notwithstanding the schemes that were laid to supplant these conquerors, they obtained permission to build a fort. From this time the court of Lisbon ranked the Moluccas among the number of their provinces, and it was not long before they really became so.

While Albuquerque's lieutenants were enriching their country with new productions, that general was engaged in completing the conquest of Malabar, which would have taken advantage of his absence to recover its liberty. After his late success, while he remained unmolested in the centre of his conquests, he employed himself in suppressing the licentiousness of the Portuguese, in establishing order throughout the colonies, and in regulating the discipline of the army. The activity, sagacity, wisdom, justice, humanity, and disinterestedness, which he had displayed in these transactions, and the idea of his virtues, had made so deep an impression on the minds of the Indians, that, for a long time after his death, they continued to repair to his tomb, to demand justice of him for the outrages committed by his successors. He died at Goa in the year 1515, without riches, and out of favour with Emanuel, who had been prevailed upon to entertain suspicions of his conduct.

*The causes of  
the enterprising  
spirit of the  
Portuguese.*

If our astonishment be raised at the number of Albuquerque's victories, and the rapidity of his conquests, how deservedly do those brave men claim our admiration, whom he had the honour to command in these expeditions! Had any nation, before that period, been seen to perform such great actions with so small a force? The Portuguese, with less than forty thousand troops, struck terror into the empire of Morocco; the barbarous nations of Africa, the Mamelucs, the Arabians, and all the eastern countries, from the island of Ormus to China. With a force in the proportion of one to a hundred, they engaged troops, which, when attacked by an enemy of equal strength, would frequently defend their lives and possessions to the last extremity. What kind of men, then, must the Portuguese have been, and what extraordinary causes must have conspired to produce such a nation of heroes?

They had been at war with the Moors near a century, when Henry of Burgandy, with several French knights, landed in Portugal, with a design to serve in Castile, under the famous Cid, whose reputation had drawn them thither. The Portuguese invited them to lend their assistance against the infidels : the knights complied, and the greatest part of them settled in Portugal. Chivalry, which has contributed as much as any other institution to exalt human nature, substituting the love of glory to the love of our country ; that refined spirit, drawn from the dregs of the barbarous ages, and calculated to repair or lessen the errors and inconveniences of the feudal government from whence it took its rise, was then revived on the banks of the Tagus, in all the splendour it had at its first appearance in France and England. The princes endeavoured to keep it alive, and to extend its influence, by establishing several orders, formed upon the plan of the ancient ones, and calculated to infuse the same spirit, which was a mixture of heroism, gallantry, and devotion.

The sovereigns raised the spirit of the nation still higher, by treating the nobility in some measure upon a footing of equality, and by setting bounds to their own authority. They frequently called together the general assembly of the states, without which, properly speaking, there can be no nation. By these states, Alphonso was invested with the regal authority, after the taking of Lisbon : and, in conjunction with them, his successors, for a long time, exercised the power of making laws. Many of these laws were calculated to inspire the love of great actions. The order of nobility was conferred upon those who had distinguished themselves by signal services ; by killing or taking prisoner the enemy's general, or his squire ; or by refusing to purchase liberty, when they were prisoners among the Moors, by renouncing their religion. On the other hand, whoever insulted a woman, gave false evidence, broke his promise, or "concealed the truth from his sovereign," was degraded from his rank. Has the discontinuance of this custom been the fault of the subjects, in not daring to tell the truth to their sovereigns ; or the fault of the sovereigns, in their unwillingness to hear it ?

The wars waged by the Portuguese in defence of their

rights and liberties, were, at the same time, religious wars. They partook of that fierce but enterprising spirit of fanaticism, which the popes had diffused at the time of the crusades. The Portuguese, therefore, were knights armed in defence of their properties, their wives, their children, and their kings, who were knights as well as themselves. Beside this, they were the heroes of the crusade, who, while they defended Christianity, were fighting for their country. To this may be added, that the nation was small, and its power extremely limited; for it is chiefly in little states, exposed to frequent dangers, that we find that enthusiastic fondness for one's country, which is utterly unknown in larger communities, enjoying greater security.

The principles of activity, vigour, and a noble elevation of mind, which united in the character of this nation, were not lost, after the expulsion of the Moors. They pursued these enemies of their religion and government into Africa. They were engaged in several wars with the kings of Castile and Leon; and during the interval that preceded their expeditions to India, the nobility lived at a distance from cities and the court, and preserved in their castles the virtues of their ancestors, together with their portraits.

When the plan of extending conquest in Africa and Asia became the object of attention among the Portuguese, a new passion co-operated with the principles just mentioned, to give additional energy to the Portuguese spirit. This passion, which at first would necessarily exalt all the rest, but which in a little time would destroy the generous principles from which they arose, was the thirst of riches. The vessels were crowded with adventurers, whose views were to enrich themselves, to serve the state, and to make proselytes. They appeared, in India, to be something more than men, till the death of Albuquerque; but, at that period, riches, which were the object and reward of their conquests, introduced universal corruption. The nobler passions gave way to the pleasures of luxury, which never fail to enervate the body, and to destroy the virtues of the mind. The weak successors of the illustrious Emanuel, and the men of indifferent talents, whom

he himself sent as viceroys to India, gradually contributed to the degeneracy of the Portuguese.

Lopez-Soarez, however, who succeeded Albuquerque, pursued his designs. He abolished a barbarous custom that prevailed in the country of Travencor, in the neighbourhood of Calicut. The inhabitants of this region consulted forcerers concerning the destiny of their children: if the magician promised a happy destiny, they were suffered to live; if he foretold any great calamities that were to befall them, they were put to death. Soarez interposed to preserve these children. He was for some time employed in preventing the opposition with which the Portuguese were threatened in India; and as soon as he was relieved from this anxiety, he resolved to attempt a passage to China.

The great Albuquerque had formed the same design. He had met with Chinese ships and merchants at Malacca, and conceived a high opinion of a nation whose very sailors had more politeness, a better sense of decorum, more good nature and humanity, than were, at that time, to be found among the European nobility. He invited the Chinese to continue their commerce with Malacca. From them, he procured a particular account of the strength, riches, and manners of their extensive empire, and communicated his intelligence to the court of Portugal.

*Arrival of the Portuguese at China. State of the empire.*

The Chinese nation was utterly unknown in Europe. Mark Paul, a Venetian, who had travelled to China by land, had given a description of it which was looked upon as fabulous. It corresponded, however, with the particulars since transmitted by Albuquerque. Credit was given to the testimony of this commander, and to his account of the lucrative trade that might be carried on with this country.

In the year 1518, a squadron sailed from Lisbon, to convey an ambassador to China. As soon as it arrived at the islands in the neighbourhood of Canton, it was surrounded by Chinese vessels, which came to reconnoitre it. Ferdinand Andrada, who commanded it, did not put himself in any posture of defence: he suffered the Chinese to

come on board, communicated the object of his voyage to the mandarins that presided at Canton, and sent his ambassador on shore, who was conducted to Peking.

The ambassador was every moment presented with some new wonder, that struck him with amazement. If we consider the largeness of the towns, the multitude of villages, the variety of canals, of which some are navigable across the empire, and others contribute to the fertility of the soil; the art of cultivating their lands, and the abundance and variety of their productions; the sagacious and mild aspect of the inhabitants; the perpetual interchange of good offices, which appeared in the country, and on the public roads; and the good order preserved among those numberless crowds who were engaged in the hurry of business; we shall not wonder at the surprise of the Portuguese ambassador, who had been accustomed to the barbarous and ridiculous manners of Europe.

*State of China,  
according to the  
panegyrists of  
that country.*

LET us for a while fix our attention upon a people who have been judged of so differently by the Europeans. Let us compare the accounts given of them by their panegyrists, with those which have been transmitted to us by their calumniators; and we may possibly derive from this contrast some light that may tend to conciliate these contradictory opinions. The history of a nation so well governed, say the partisans of China, is the history of mankind: the rest of the world resembles the chaos of matter before it was wrought into form. After a long series of devastation, society has at length risen to order and harmony. States and nations are produced from each other, like individuals, with this difference, that, in families, Nature brings about the death of some, and provides for the birth of others, in a constant and regular succession: but, in states, this rule is violated and destroyed, by the disorders of society; where it sometimes happens, that ancient monarchies stifle rising republics in their births; and that a rude and savage people, rushing like a torrent, sweep away multitudes of states, which are disunited and broken in pieces.

China alone has been exempted from this fatality. This empire, bounded on the north by Russian Tartary,

on the south by India, on the west by Thibet, and on the east by the ocean, comprehends almost all the eastern extremity of the continent of Asia. It is eighteen hundred leagues in circumference, and is said to have lasted through a successive series of four thousand years: nor is this antiquity in the least to be wondered at. The narrow bounds of our history, and the small extent of our kingdoms, which rise and fall in a quick succession, are the consequence of wars, superstition, and the unfavourable circumstances of our situation. But the Chinese, who are encompassed and defended on all sides by seas and deserts, like the ancient Egyptians, may have given a lasting stability to their empire. As soon as their coasts and the inland parts of their territories have been peopled and cultivated, this happy nation must of course have been the centre of attraction to all the surrounding people: and the wandering or cantoned tribes must necessarily have gradually attached themselves to a body of men, who speak less frequently of the conquests they have made, than of the attacks they have suffered; and are happier in the thought of having civilized their conquerors, than they could have been in that of having destroyed their invaders.

In a country where a civilized government has been so anciently established, we may every where expect to find strong vestiges of the continued exertions of industry. Its roads have been levelled with the exactest care; and, in general, have no greater declivity than is necessary to facilitate the watering of the land, which the Chinese consider, with reason, as one of the greatest helps in agriculture. There are but few, even of the most useful trees, because their fruits would rob the corn of its nourishment. We cannot, therefore, expect to meet here with those gardens full of flowers, verdant lawns, groves, and fountains, the sight of which is calculated to exhilarate the idle spectator, while they seem concealed and removed from the public eye, as if the owners were afraid of showing how much their amusements had encroached upon the soil that ought to be cultivated for the support of life. The land is not overcharged with those parks or extensive forests, which are not near so serviceable to mankind, by the wood they furnish, as prejudicial, by preventing

agriculture ; and while they contribute to the pleasure of the great, by the beasts that range in them, prove a real misfortune to the husbandman. In China, the beauty of a country-seat consists in its being happily situated, surrounded with an agreeable variety of cultivated fields, and interspersed with trees planted irregularly, and with some heaps of a porous stone, which, at a distance, have the appearance of rocks or mountains.

The hills are generally cut into terraces, supported by dry walls. Here there are reservoirs, constructed with ingenuity, for the reception of rain and spring water. It is not uncommon to see the bottom, summit, and declivity of a hill, watered by the same canal, by means of a number of engines, of a simple construction, which save manual labour, and perform, with two men, what could not be done with a thousand any where else. These heights commonly yield three crops in a year. They are first sown with a kind of radish, which produces an oil ; then with cotton ; and, after that, with potatoes. This is the common method of culture ; but the rule is not without exception.

Upon most of the mountains which are incapable of being cultivated for the subsistence of man, proper trees are planted, for building houses or ships. Many of these mountains contain iron, tin, and copper mines, sufficient to supply the empire. The gold mines have been neglected, either because their produce did not defray the expence of working them, or because the gold dust washed down by the torrents, was found sufficient for the purposes of exchange.

The sandy plains, saved from the ravages of the ocean (which changes its bed as rivers do their course, in a space of time so exactly proportioned to the difference in the mass of water, that a small encroachment of the sea causes a thousand revolutions on the surface of the globe) ; form, at this day, the provinces of Nankin and Tche-kiang, which are the finest in the empire. As the Egyptians checked the course of the Nile, the Chinese have repulsed, restrained, and given laws to the ocean. They have re-united to the continent, tracts of land which had been disjoined by this element. To the action of the universe, the Chinese oppose the labours of industry ; and

while nations, the most celebrated in history, have, by the rage of conquest, increased the ravages which time is perpetually making upon this globe, they exert such efforts to retard the progress of universal devastation, as might appear supernatural, if they were not continual and evident.

To the improvements of land, this nation adds, if we may be allowed the expression, the improvement of the water. The rivers, which communicate with each other by canals, and run under the walls of most of the towns, present us with the prospect of floating cities, composed of an infinite number of boats, filled with people, who live constantly upon the water, and whose sole employment is fishing. The sea itself is covered with numberless vessels, whose masts, at a distance, appear like moving forests. Anson mentions it as a reproach to the fishermen belonging to these boats, that they did not give themselves a moment's intermission from their work to look at his ship, which was the largest that had ever anchored in those latitudes. But this inattention to an object, which appeared to a Chinese sailor of no use, though it was in the way of his profession, is, perhaps, a proof of the happiness of a people, who prefer business to matters of mere curiosity.

The mode of cultivation is by no means uniform throughout this empire, but varies according to the nature of the soil and the difference of the climate. In the low countries towards the south, rice is sown, which, being always under water, grows to a great size, and yields two crops in a year. In the inland parts of the country, where the situation is lofty and dry, the soil produces a species of rice, which is neither so large, so well tasted, or so nourishing as the former, and makes the husbandman but one return in the year for his labour. In the northern parts, the same kinds of grain are cultivated as in Europe: they grow in as great plenty, and are of as good a quality, as in any of our most fertile countries. From one end of China to the other, there are large quantities of vegetables, particularly in the south; where, together with fish, they supply the place of meat, which is the general food of the other provinces. But the improvement of lands is universally understood and attended



to. All the different kinds of manure are carefully preserved, and skilfully distributed to the best advantage ; and that which arises from fertile lands, is applied to make them still more fertile. This grand system of nature, which is sustained by destruction and re-production, is better understood and attended to in China, than in any other country in the world.

The first cause of the rural economy of the Chinese, is that character of industry by which these people are particularly distinguished, who, in their nature, require a less share of repose. Every day in the year is devoted to labour, except the first, which is employed in paying and receiving visits among relations ; and the last, which is sacred to the memory of their ancestors. The first is a social duty ; the latter, a part of domestic worship. In this nation of sages, whatever unites and civilizes mankind, is religion : and religion itself is nothing more than the practice of the social virtues. They are a sober and rational people, who want nothing more than the controul of civil laws to make them just : their private worship consists in the love of their parents, whether living or dead ; and their public worship, in the love of labour ; and that kind of labour which is holden in the most sacred veneration, is agriculture.

The generosity of two of their emperors is much revered, who, preferring the interests of the state to those of their family, kept their own children from the throne, to make room for men taken from the plough. The Chinese also revere the memory of those husbandmen who sowed the seeds of the happiness and stability of the empire in the fertile bosom of the earth, that inexhaustible source of whatever conduces to the nourishment, and consequently to the increase of mankind.

In imitation of these royal husbandmen, the emperors of China become husbandmen officially. It is one of their public functions, to break up the ground in the spring : and the parade and magnificence that accompanies this ceremony, draws together all the farmers in the neighbourhood of the capital. They flock in crowds, to see their prince perform this solemnity, in honour of the first of all the arts. It is not, as in the fables of Greece, a god who tends the flocks of a king : it is the father of his

people; who, holding the plough with his own hands, shows his children what are the true riches of the state. In a little time, he repairs again to the field he has ploughed himself, to sow the seed that is most proper for the ground. The example of the prince is followed in all the provinces; and at the same seasons, the viceroys repeat the same ceremonies, in the presence of a numerous concourse of husbandmen. The Europeans who have been present at this solemnity at Canton, never speak of it without emotion; and make us regret, that this festival, the political aim of which is the encouragement of labour, is not established in our climate, instead of that number of religious feasts, which seem to be invented by idleness, to make the country a barren waste.

It is not to be imagined, however, that the court of Peking is really engaged in the labours of a rural life. The arts of luxury are grown to so great a height in China, that these transactions can only pass for mere ceremonies. But the law, which obliges the prince to show this token of respect to the profession of husbandmen, has a tendency to promote the advantage of agriculture. The deference paid by the sovereign to public opinions, contributes to perpetuate them; and the influence of opinion is the principal spring that actuates the political machine.

This influence is preserved in China, by conferring honours on all husbandmen who excel in the cultivation of the ground. When any useful discovery is made, the author of it is called to court, to communicate it to the prince; and is sent by the government into the provinces, to instruct them in this method. In a word, in this country, where nobility is not hereditary, but a mere personal reward, indiscriminately bestowed upon merit, several of the magistrates, and persons raised to the highest employments in the empire, are chosen out of families which are solely employed in the cultivation of land.

These encouragements, which belong to the manners of the people, are further seconded by the best political institutions. Whatever is in its nature incapable of being divided, as the sea, rivers, canals, &c. is enjoyed in common, and is the property of no individual. Every one has the liberty of going upon the water, of fishing, and hunting; and a subject who is in possession of an estate,

whether acquired by himself, or left by his relations, is in no danger of having his right called in question by the tyrannical authority of the feudal laws.

The smallness of the taxes is still a further encouragement to agriculture. Except the customs established in the sea-ports, there are but two kinds of tribute known in the empire. The first, which is personal, is paid by every citizen from twenty to sixty years of age, in proportion to his income. The second, which is levied on the produce of the land, amounts to a tenth, a twentieth, or a thirtieth part, according to the quality of the soil. There certainly have been some of their emperors, or ministers, who have attempted to extend and multiply the taxes; but as such an undertaking would require much time, and that no man could flatter himself that he should live to see the success of it, the attempt has been given up. Men of bad principles aim at immediate enjoyment; while the virtuous minister, extending his benevolent views beyond the present generation, contents himself with forming designs, and propagating useful truths, for the advantage of posterity, without expecting to see the effect of them himself.

The manner of levying the contributions in China is as mild as the contributions themselves. The only penalty inflicted on persons liable to be taxed, and who are too slow in the payment of the tribute demanded by the public, is to quarter old, infirm, and poor people upon them, to be maintained at their expence, till they have discharged the debt due to government. This manner of proceeding has a tendency to awaken pity and humanity in the breast of a citizen, when he sees miserable objects, and hears the cries of hunger; instead of giving him disgust, and exciting his resentment, by the odious perquisitions and researches of the finance, as practised in Europe, by forcible seizures, and the menaces of an insolent soldiery, who come to live at discretion in a house exposed to the numberless extortions of the treasury.

The mandarins levy the tenth part of the produce of the earth in kind, and collect the poll-tax in money. The officers in the municipal towns pay the whole of the produce into the public treasury, through the hands of the receiver-general of the province. The use that is

made of this revenue, prevents all frauds in collecting it ; as it is well known, that a part of these duties is allotted for the maintenance of the magistrates and soldiers. The money arising from the sale of this proportion of the product of the lands which has been exposed to sale, is never issued from the treasury, but in public exigencies. It is laid up in the magazines against times of scarcity, when the people receive what they had only lent, as it were, in times of plenty.

It may naturally be expected that a nation, enjoying so many advantages, would be extremely populous ; especially in a climate where, whatever reason may be assigned for it, the women are remarkably prolific ; where debauchery is very uncommon ; where the extent of paternal rights necessarily excites the desire of having a numerous progeny ; where an equality of fortunes prevails, which the difference of conditions renders impossible in other places ; where the mode of living is generally simple, little expensive, and tending always to the most rigid economy ; where wars are neither frequent nor destructive ; where celibacy is proscribed by the manners of the country ; and where the healthiness of the climate prevents epidemic diseases. Accordingly, there is no country in the universe so populous as this. The population is indeed carried to too great a height, since it appears, from the records of the empire, that a bad harvest seldom fails to produce an insurrection.

It is unnecessary to search beyond this circumstance for the reasons which prevent despotism from making any advances in China. It is evident from these frequent revolutions, that the people are fully sensible that a regard to the rights of property, and submission to the laws, are duties of a secondary class, subordinate to the original rights of nature, whose only view, in the formation of communities, has been the common benefit of those who enter into them. Accordingly, when the more immediate necessities of life fail, the Chinese cease to acknowledge an authority which does not provide for their subsistence. The right of kings is founded on the regard they pay to the preservation of the people. Neither religion nor morality teach any other doctrine in China.

The emperor is well aware, that he presides over a peo-

ple who submit to the laws no longer than while they promote their happiness. He is sensible, that if the spirit of tyranny, which is so common and epidemical in other countries, should seize him but for a moment, such a violent opposition would be raised, that he would be expelled from the throne. Accordingly, finding himself invested with the supreme command by a people who observe and criticise his conduct, he is far from attempting to erect himself into an object of religious superstition, which sets no bounds to its authority. He does not violate the sacred contract, by virtue of which he holds the sceptre. He is convinced that the people are so well acquainted with their rights, and know so well how to defend them, that whenever a province complains of the mandarin who governs it, he recalls him without examination, and delivers him up to a tribunal, which proceeds against him if he be in fault; but should he even prove innocent, he is not reinstated in his employment; for even the circumstance of its having been possible for him to excite the resentment of the people, is imputed to him as a crime. He is considered as an ignorant tutor, who attempts to deprive a father of the love his children bear him. This compliance, which, in other countries, would nourish perpetual discontent, and occasion an infinite number of intrigues, is not attended with any inconvenience in China, where the inhabitants are naturally disposed to be mild and just, and the constitution of the state is so ordered, that its delegates have seldom any rigorous commands to execute.

This obligation the prince is under of being just, tends to make him more wise and intelligent. He is in China what we wish to make princes in all countries believe they are, the idol of his people. It should seem that the manners and laws of this country have mutually conspired to establish this fundamental principle, that China is a family of which the emperor is the patriarch. It is not as a conqueror, or a legislator, that he holds his authority; but as a father: it is by this tie that he governs, rewards, and punishes. This pleasing sentiment gives him a greater share of power, than the tyrants of other nations can possibly derive from the number of their troops, or the artifices of their ministers. It is not to be imagined what

esteem and affection the Chinese have for their emperor ; or, as they express it, for their common, their universal father.

This public veneration is founded upon that which is established by private education. In China, the father and mother claim an absolute right over their children at every period of life, even when raised to the highest dignity. Paternal authority and filial affection are the springs of this empire : they regulate the manners, and are the tie that unites the prince to his subjects, the subjects to their prince, and the citizens to one another. The Chinese government, by the gradual perfection it has acquired, has been brought back to that point from which all other governments seem to have finally and irrevocably degenerated ; to the patriarchal government, which is that of nature itself.

This sublime system of morals, which for so many ages has contributed to the prosperity of the Chinese empire, would, however, probably have experienced an insensible change, if the chimerical distinctions allowed to birth had destroyed that original equality established by nature among mankind, and which ought only to give way to superior abilities and superior merit. In all the states of Europe, there are a set of men who assume, from their infancy, a pre-eminence independent of their moral character. The attention paid them from the moment of their birth, gives them the idea that they are formed for command ; they soon learn to consider themselves as a distinct species, and being secure of a certain rank and station, take no pains to make themselves worthy of it.

This institution, to which we owe so many indifferent ministers, ignorant magistrates, and bad generals, is not established in China, where nobility does not descend by hereditary right. The same any citizen acquires, begins and ends with himself. The son of the prime minister of the empire has no advantages at the moment of his birth, but those he may have derived from nature. The rank of nobility is sometimes conferred upon the ancestors of a man who has done signal services to his country ; but this mark of distinction, which is merely personal, dies with its possessor, and his children derive no other advantage from it than the memory and example of his virtues.

In consequence of this perfect equality, the Chinese are enabled to establish an uniform system of education, and to inculcate correspondent principles. It is no difficult task to persuade men who are upon an equal footing by birth, that they are all brethren. This opinion gives them every advantage which a contrary idea would make them lose. A Chinese, who should abstract himself from this common fraternity, would become a solitary and miserable being, and wander as a stranger in the heart of his country.

Instead of those frivolous distinctions which are allotted to birth in almost every other country, the Chinese substitute real ones, founded entirely on personal merit. A set of wise and intelligent men, who are honoured with the title of the learned mandarins, devote themselves to the study of all sciences necessary to qualify them for the administration of public affairs. None can be admitted into this respectable society, who are not recommended by their talents and knowledge; for riches give no claim to this privilege. The mandarins themselves fix upon proper persons to associate with them; and their choice is always the result of a strict examination. There are different classes of mandarins, the succession to which is regulated by merit, and not by seniority.

From this body of mandarins, the emperor, according to a custom as ancient as the empire, elects ministers, magistrates, governors of provinces, and officers of every denomination who are called to any employment in the state. As his choice can only fall upon men of tried abilities, the welfare of the people is always lodged in the hands of those who are worthy of such a trust.

In consequence of this institution, no dignity is hereditary except that of the crown; and even that does not always devolve on the eldest son; but on him whom the emperor and the council of mandarins judge most worthy. By this method, a spirit of virtuous emulation prevails even in the imperial family. The throne is given to merit alone, and it is assigned to the heir only in consideration of his abilities. The emperors rather choose to look for a successor in a different family, than to intrust the reins of government to unskilful hands.

The viceroys and magistrates enjoy the affection of the

people, at the same time that they partake of the authority of the sovereign; and any mistakes in their administration meet with the same indulgence that is shown to those of the supreme legislator. They have not that tendency to sedition which prevails in this part of the world. In China there is no set of men to form or manage a faction: as the mandarins have no rich and powerful family connections, they can derive no support but from the crown, and their own wisdom. They are trained up in a way of thinking that inspires humanity, the love of order, beneficence, and respect for the laws. They take pains to inculcate these sentiments into the people, and secure their attachment to every law, by pointing out to them its useful tendency. The sovereign passes no edict that does not convey some moral or political instruction. The people necessarily become acquainted with their interests, and the measures taken by government to promote them; and the better informed they are, the more likely they will be to remain quiet.

Superstition, which excites disturbances in all other countries, and either establishes tyranny, or overthrows government, has no influence in China. It is tolerated, injudiciously perhaps by the laws; but, at least, it never makes laws itself. No person can have any share in the government, who does not belong to the class of literati, who admit of no superstition. The bonzes are not allowed to ground the duties of morality upon the doctrines of their sects, nor consequently to dispense with them. If they impose upon some part of the nation, their artifices do not affect those whose example and authority are of the greatest importance to the state.

Confucius, in whose actions and discourses precept was joined to example, whose memory is equally revered, and whose doctrine is equally embraced by all classes and sects whatsoever, was the founder of the national religion of China. His code contains a system of natural law, which ought to be the ground-work of all religions, the rule of society, and standard of all governments. He taught, that reason was an emanation of the Deity; and that the supreme law consisted in the harmony between nature and reason. The religion that runs in opposition to these two guides of human life, does not come from heaven.



As the Chinese have no term for God, they say that heaven is God. "But," says the emperor Changchi, in an edict published in 1710, "it is not to the visible and material heaven that we offer our sacrifices, but to the "Lord of heaven." Thus atheism, though not uncommon in China, is not publicly professed. It is neither the characteristic of a sect, nor an object of persecution; but is tolerated as well as superstition.

The emperor, who is sole pontiff, is likewise the judge in matters of religion; but as the national worship was made for the government, not the government for it; and as both were designed to be subservient to the ends of society; it is neither the interest nor inclination of the sovereign to employ the combination of authority lodged in his hands, for the purposes of oppression. If on the one hand the doctrines and ceremonies of the hierarchy do not prevent the prince from making an ill use of absolute authority; he is more powerfully restrained on the other, by the general influence of the national manners.

Any attempt to change these manners would be attended with the greatest difficulty, because they are inculcated by a mode of education which is, perhaps, the best we are acquainted with. The Chinese do not make a point of instructing their children till they are five years old. They are then taught to write words or hieroglyphics, which represent sensible objects, of which at the same time they endeavour to give them clear ideas. Afterwards, their memory is stored with sententious verses, containing precepts of morality, which they are taught to reduce to practice. As they advance in years, they are instructed in the philosophy of Confucius. This is the manner of education among the ordinary ranks. The children who may aspire to posts of honour, begin in the same manner; but intermix other studies relative to human conduct in the different stations of life.

In China, the manners take their complexion from the laws, and are preserved by common usage, which is likewise prescribed by the laws. The Chinese have a greater number of precepts, relating to the most common actions, than any other people in the world. Their code of politeness is very voluminous; the lowest citizen is in-

structed in it, and observes it with the same exactness as the mandarins and the court.

The laws in this code, like all the rest, are formed with a view of keeping up the opinion that China is but one great family, and of promoting that regard and mutual affection in the citizens, which is due to each other as brethren. These rights and customs tend to preserve the manners. Sometimes, indeed, ceremonies are substituted for sentiment ; but how often are they the means of reviving it ! They compose a kind of constant homage that is paid to virtue ; and is calculated to engage the attention of youth. This homage preserves the respect due to virtue herself ; and if it sometimes leads to hypocrisy, it encourages at least a laudable zeal. Tribunals are erected to take cognizance of transgressions against custom ; as well as to punish crimes, and reward merit. Mild and moderate punishments are inflicted upon crimes, and virtue is distinguished by marks of honour. Honour is, therefore, one of the principles that actuate the Chinese government : and though it be the leading one, it operates more strongly than fear, and more feebly than affection.

Under the influence of such institutions, China must be the country in the whole world where men are most humane. Accordingly, the humanity of the Chinese is conspicuous on those occasions, where it should seem that virtue could have no other object but justice ; and that justice could not be executed without severity. Their prisoners are confined in neat and commodious apartments, where they are well taken care of, even to the moment when they suffer. It frequently happens, that the only punishment inflicted on a rich man amounts to no more than obliging him, for a certain time, to maintain or clothe some old men and orphans at his own expence. Our moral and political romances form the real history of the Chinese, who have regulated all the actions of men with such an exact nicety, that they have scarcely any need of sentiment. Yet they do not fail to cultivate the latter, in order to give a proper estimation to the former.

The spirit of patriotism, that spirit, without which states are mere colonies, and not nations, is stronger, per-

haps, and more active among the Chinese, than it is found in any republic. It is common to see them voluntarily contributing their labour to repair the public roads; the rich build places of shelter upon them for the use of travellers; and others plant trees there. Such actions, which are proofs of a beneficent humanity rather than an ostentation of generosity, are far from being uncommon in China.

There have been times, when they have been frequent, and others, when they have been less so; but the corruption which was the cause of the latter, brought on a revolution, and the manners of the people were reformed. They suffered by the late invasion of the Tartars: they are now recovering, in proportion as the princes of that victorious nation lay aside the superstitions of their own country, to adopt the principles of the nation they have conquered; and in proportion as they improve in the knowledge of those books which the Chinese call canonical.

It cannot be long before we see the amiable character of this nation entirely revived; that fraternal and kindred principle, those enchanting and social ties, which soften the manners of the people, and attach them inviolably to the laws. Political errors and vices cannot take deep root in a country where no persons are ever promoted to public employments, but such as are of the sect of the learned, whose sole occupation is to instruct themselves in the principles of morality and government. As long as real knowledge shall be holden in estimation, as long as it shall continue to lead to public honours, there will exist among the people of China a fund of reason and virtue, which will not be found among other nations.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that the greatest part of those improvements, which depend upon theories that are in the least complicated, are not so far advanced there, as might naturally be expected from that ancient, active, and diligent people, who have so long had a clue to them. But this circumstance is not inexplicable. The Chinese language requires a long and laborious study, scarcely to be comprehended within the term of a man's life. The rites and ceremonies, which they observe upon every occasion, afford more exercise for their

memory than their sensibility. Their manners are calculated to check the impulses of the soul, and weaken its operations. Too assiduous in the pursuit of what is useful, they have no opportunity of launching out into the extensive regions of imagination. An excessive veneration for antiquity, makes them the slaves of whatever is established. All these causes united, must necessarily have stifled, among the Chinese, the spirit of invention. It requires ages with them to bring any thing to perfection; and whoever reflects on the state in which arts and sciences were found among them three hundred years ago, must be convinced of the extraordinary antiquity of their empire.

The low state of learning and of the fine arts in China, may perhaps be further owing to the very perfection of its government, and system of policy. This paradox has its foundation in reason. Where the study of the laws holds the first rank in a nation, and is rewarded with an appointment in the administration instead of a post in an academy; where learning is applied to the regulation of manners, or the maintenance of the public weal; where the same nation is exceedingly populous, and requires a constant attention in its learned members to make subsistence keep an equal pace with population; where every individual, beside the duties he owes to the public, which take a considerable time to be well understood, has particular duties arising from the claims of his family or profession: in such a nation, the speculative and ornamental parts of science cannot be expected to arrive at that height of splendour they have attained in Europe. But the Chinese, who are only our scholars in the arts of luxury and vanity, are our masters in the science of good government. They can teach us the art of increasing population, not that of destroying it.

• One of the arts in which the Chinese have made the least progress, is that of war. It is natural to imagine, that a nation, whose whole conduct, like that of infants, is influenced by ceremonies, precepts, and customs, either of private or public institution, must consequently be pliant, moderate, and inclined to tranquillity both at home and abroad. Reason and reflection, while they cherish sentiments like these, leave no room for that enthusiasm,

which constitutes the hero and the warrior. The spirit of humanity, which they imbibe in their tender years, makes them look with abhorrence on those sanguinary scenes of rapine and massacre, that are so familiar to nations of a warlike turn. With such dispositions, can we wonder that the Chinese are not warriors? They have soldiers without number, but totally undisciplined, except in the single article of obedience, and which are still more deficient in military manœuvres than in courage. In their wars with the Tartars, the Chinese knew not how to fight, and only stood to be killed. Their attachment to their government, their country, and their laws, may supply the want of a warlike spirit, but will never supply the want of good arms and military skill. When a nation has found the art of subduing its conquerors by its manners, it has no occasion to overcome its enemies by force of arms.

Is there a man who can look with so much indifference upon the happiness of a considerable portion of the human race, as not to wish that the state of China were really such as we have been representing it? Let us, however, attend to what those persons have to say upon the subject, who think themselves warranted in entertaining a contrary opinion.

*State of China according to the accounts of the calumniators of that empire.*

IN order to judge, say these people, of a nation, equally closed on all sides, since foreigners are not permitted to enter into it, and the natives are prohibited from going out of it, it is necessary to set out from some principles, which, however uncertain they may be, are still received as sound principles. These shall be the very facts that are alleged by the panegyrist of China. We shall take them for granted, without entering into a discussion of them; and we shall only draw the conclusions that are necessarily derived from them.

1. China enjoyed, or was under the calamity of an immense population, when it was conquered by the Tartars; and it is concluded, from the circumstance of the laws having been adopted by the conqueror, that they must have been wise laws.

This submission of the Tartars to the Chinese government does not appear to us to be a proof of its excellence. It is in the nature of things that great bodies should give the law to little ones ; and this rule is observed in morality as well as in philosophy. If we, therefore, compare the number of the conquerors with that of the vanquished people, we shall find, that to one Tartar there were fifty thousand Chinese. Is it possible that one individual should alter the customs, manners, and legislation, of fifty thousand men ? Besides, how could it happen otherwise than that these Tartars should have adopted the Chinese laws, when they had none of their own to substitute to them ? The circumstances which this extraordinary revolution most conspicuously displays are the cowardice of the nation, and its indifference for its masters, which is one of the most striking characteristics of the slave. Let us proceed to consider the population of China.

2. From time immemorial agriculture has been honoured in China : this is a fact upon which all are agreed. Every country addicted to husbandry, and which enjoys a long continuance of peace ; which does not experience any bloody revolutions ; which is neither oppressed by tyranny, nor exposed to devastation by the diseases of the climate ; and where we see the laborious citizen collecting in the plain a basket full of earth, carrying it up to the tops of the mountains, covering the naked point of a rock with it, and keeping it in its situation by little pallisades ; such a country must infallibly abound with inhabitants. Would these inhabitants, indeed, employ themselves in extravagant labours, if the plain from which they have gathered this small parcel of land, were uncultivated, deserted, and abandoned to the first man who might be desirous of possessing it ? If the people were at liberty to extend themselves into the country, would they remain clustered together in the neighbourhood of the cities ? The empire of China is, therefore, very well peopled in all its parts.

The country is intersected by a great number of canals, which would be useless, if they did not establish a frequent and necessary communication between one place and another. What can these things imply, unless it be a great

deal of internal motion, and consequently a very considerable degree of population?

Every country subsisting by husbandry, where dearths are frequent, and where those dearths occasion the insurrection of thousands of men; where, in the course of these insurrections, more crimes and murders are committed; and there are more conflagrations and more pillaging, than would take place on the irruption of a band of savages; and where, as soon as the season of the famine and the revolt is over, the administration abstains from pursuing the criminal, such a country certainly contains a greater number of inhabitants than it can subsist. Would not the Chinese be the most absurd of all people, if the accidental want of the necessaries of life proceeded from their neglect, either in cultivating their land, or in providing for their subsistence? But China, an immense and fertile country, so well cultivated, and so admirably governed, is not the less exposed to this sort of calamity. It must, therefore, contain ten times, twenty times as many inhabitants as it does acres of land.

Every country, in which the attachment of parents to their offspring, a sentiment so natural, that it is common to man and brutes, is totally disregarded, and in which the children are murdered, stifled, or exposed, without incurring the resentment of the public, has either too many inhabitants, or is occupied by a race of men different from any other on the surface of the globe. This, however, is what is practised in China; and to deny or to invalidate this fact, would be to throw the veil of uncertainty upon all the rest.

But there is still another phenomenon which more particularly confirms the opinion of the excessive population of China; and this is, the little progress the arts and sciences have made there, in proportion to the extreme length of time they have been cultivated. The spirit of inquiry has stopped just at that point where, ceasing to be useful, its researches begin to be mere objects of curiosity. There is more advantage to be derived from the invention of the most trifling practical art, than from the most sublime discovery, which should be only the work of genius. The man who knows how to cut up a piece of gauze to the best advantage would be in higher estima-

tion than he who should resolve the most difficult problem in philosophy. In this country that question is more particularly repeated which we hear too frequently among ourselves, "what is the use of all this?" I ask whether this spirit of tranquillity, so contrary to the natural disposition of man, who is always inclined to go beyond what he already knows, can be otherwise explained, than by a degree of population which prohibits idleness and the spirit of contemplation, and which keeps the nation in a continual state of anxiety and attention to its wants. China is, therefore, the most populous region on the face of the globe.

This being granted, doth it not follow that it is also the most corrupt? Do we not learn from general experience, that the vices of society are in proportion to the number of individuals which compose it? What answer could be made, if it were to be affirmed, that the morals of the Chinese, throughout the whole extent of their empire, must necessarily be still more depraved than in our largest cities, where a sense of honour, at least, to which the Chinese is a stranger, adds a lustre to virtue, and conceals the deformity of vice?

May it not be asked, what is, and what must be the character of a people, among whom we see not unfrequently one province rushing upon another, and putting all the inhabitants to death, without mercy and with impunity? Can the manners of such a people be mild? Is that nation to be esteemed civilized or barbarous in which the laws neither restrain nor punish the exposition or the murder of new-born infants? Can these people be said to cherish, in an eminent degree, the sentiments of humanity, benevolence, and commiseration? Or, can we entertain a high opinion of their wisdom, when, being incited by a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances to found colonies, they have either not conceived, or have disdained to put in practice, an expedient so simple, and so effectual against the dreadful calamities to which they are repeatedly and continually exposed?

So far, we cannot form any high opinion of the wisdom of the Chinese. Let us see whether the examination of the constitution of the empire, of the conduct of the sovereign and his ministers, of the knowledge of the learn-



ed, and of the manners of the people, will contribute to inspire us with a more sublime idea of it.

3. A serious writer, who is not among the crowd that admires the wisdom of the Chinese, says expressly, that "the cudgel is the sovereign of China." According to this ludicrous, and at the same time sagacious idea, I imagine there would be some difficulty in persuading us that a nation, in which man is treated as beasts are in other places, can have the least tincture of those delicate and susceptible manners that prevail in Europe, where an injurious word is expiated with blood, and where even a threatening gesture is revenged by death. The Chinese must be of a very pacific and forbearing disposition. So much the better, say our antagonists.

The "sovereign of China is, however, considered, "obeyed, and respected as the father of his subjects." In our turn we shall say, so much the worse. This is, indeed, a certain proof of the humble submission of the children, but not of the goodness of the father. The best expedient to precipitate a nation into the most abject state of slavery, from which it never can recover, is to consecrate the title of despot, by adding that of father to it. Such monsters are rarely to be met with anywhere, as children who dare lift up their hands against their parents; but, in defiance of the authority of the laws, which has set limits to paternal authority, we find, unfortunately, that parents who treat their children ill are a species of monsters too commonly met with everywhere. The child never calls his father to account for his conduct; and the liberty of the subject, which is ever in danger, if the sovereign be screened from every kind of inquiry, by his infinitely respectable title of father, will become annihilated under a despot, who shall not allow the least investigation of the principles of his administration.

We may perhaps mistake, but the Chinese appear to us to be bent under the yoke of a double tyranny; of paternal tyranny in a family, and of civil tyranny in the empire. From whence we might venture to conclude, that they are the most mild, the most insinuating, the most respectful, the most timid, the most abject, and least dangerous of all slaves; unless we suppose an exception to have been made in their favour, to the experience of all na-

tions, and of all ages. What is the effect of paternal despotism amongst us? The marks of outward respect, joined to a secret and ineffectual hatred against our fathers. What has been, and what is still the effect of civil despotism in all nations? Meanness, and the total extinction of every virtue. If things have taken another turn in China, let us be informed in what manner this miracle has been accomplished.

It is alleged, "the emperor is well aware that he presides over a people who submit to the laws no longer than while they promote their happiness." Is there any difference between the Chinese and the European upon this point? "He is sensible, that if the spirit of tyranny should seize him but for a moment, he would be in danger of being expelled from the throne."—Do not ancient and modern histories present us with instances of this just and terrible punishment? And what effect have they produced? Will it be said, that a Chinese is more impatient of oppression than an Englishman or a Frenchman? or, that China has never been, is not at present, and never will be hereafter, governed by any but the most accomplished monarchs? What absurdities are we not made to adopt by our blind veneration for antiquity and for distant regions? Mercy, firmness, application, knowledge, the love of the people and justice, are qualities which nature only bestows, even separately, upon a few distinguished mortals; and there is not any one in whom they are not unfortunately more or less weakened by the dangerous possession of the supreme power. It has, therefore, been reserved to China alone to escape this curse which has begun with all societies, and will last as long as they do.

Certainly. "For there is a tribunal constantly subsisting by the side of the throne, which keeps an exact and severe account of the emperor's actions."—Does not the same kind of tribunal exist in all countries? Are monarchs unacquainted with it? or, do they fear or respect it? The difference between our tribunal and that of China, is, that ours, being composed of the whole body of the nation, cannot be corrupted; while that of the Chinese consists only of a small number of learned men. Most singularly fortunate country, where the historian is

neither pusillanimous, nor servile, nor open to seduction; and where the prince, who has the power to order the hand or head of his historian to be cut off, turns pale with fear, as soon as the writer takes up his pen! There have never been any, except good kings, who have stood in awe of the judgment of their cotemporaries, and of the censure of posterity.

Accordingly, “the sovereigns of China are virtuous, just, resolute, and enlightened.”—What! all of them without exception? We may, however, reasonably presume, that the imperial palace of China does not differ from the palace of the sovereign in all other countries. It is one single dwelling in the midst of the numberless habitations of the subjects: that is to say, that when genius or virtue happen to fall once from heaven directly upon the house of the ruler, they must necessarily fall one hundred thousand times upon the side of it. But perhaps this law of nature does not hold in China as it does in Europe, where we should esteem ourselves too fortunate, if, after a good king shall have ten bad successors, there should arise one to resemble him.

But “the sovereign authority in China is limited.”—Where is it not? Or, in what manner, and by whom is it limited in China? If the barrier that protect the people be not thick set with lances, swords, and bayonets, turned against the breast, or against the sacred head of the paternal and despotic emperor, we should be apprehensive, though perhaps without reason, that this barrier in China would be nothing more than a large cobweb, upon which the image of Justice and Liberty may have been painted, while, through its transparency, the quick-sighted man may readily discern the hideous form of the despot. Have there been a great number of tyrants deposed, imprisoned, sentenced, and put to death there? Does the public scaffold continually stream with the blood of the sovereigns? Why have not these events taken place?

Why? “because the Chinese government, by a series of revolutions, has been brought back to that state from which all other nations have receded, the patriarchal government.”—Let us observe, under favour of our antagonists, that the patriarchal government of an im-

menſe region, of a family conſiſting of two hundred millions of individuals, appears to be an idea almoſt as viſionary, as that of a republic extending over one half of the known world. The republican form of government implies a country, the limits of which are ſufficiently confined to admit of a ſpeedy and eaſy communication of the wiſhes of the people ; as the patriarchal form of government ſuppoſes a ſmall wandering nation living under tents. The notion of a patriarchal government exiſting in China, is a kind of ſpeculative illuſion, that would raiſe a ſmile in the emperor and his mandarins.

4. “As the mandarins are not attached to any rich or “powerful families, the empire is free from commotions.”—Singular aſſertions ; that the tranquillity of the empire is ſecured by the very circumſtance which ſeems moſt likely to diſturb it ! Unleſs we ſuppoſe that Richelieu had miſtaken, in his ſyſtem of politics, when he made it a rule, that great places were not to be given to men of low extraction or fortune, who are actuated by no other motive than their duty.

“It is a fact, that theſe ſtateſmen never excite any commotions.”—Perhaps it may be equally a fact, that they have no poor relations to take care of, no flatterers to load with favours, no favourites or miſtreſſes to enrich ; and that they are equally ſuperior to ſeduction as to error. But a circumſtance which is incontestible, is, that theſe magiſtrates, or chiefs of the law, carry about with them, without a ſenſe of ſhame, the marks of their degradation and ignominy. What an opinion can we have of a magiſtrate who bears the banner or enſign of his own diſgrace, without being humbled by it ! What can we think of a people, whoſe reverence for ſuch a magiſtrate is not diminished ?

5. After the ſovereign and the mandarin, the learned man preſents himſelf to our examination. This learned man is a perſon educated in a doctrine which inſpires humanity ; and who teaches it to others. A man who preaches the love of order, benevolence, and reſpect for the laws ; and who diffuſes theſe ſentiments among the people, and points out their utility to them.—And have we not in our ſchools and our pulpits, amongſt our clergy, our magiſtrates, and philoſophers, men who may be reckon-

ed not inferior to these literati, either in knowledge or in sound morals; who exercise the same functions, both in their discourses and in their writings, in the capital, in the great cities, in the smaller towns, in the villages, and in the hamlets? If the wisdom of a nation were to be computed by the number of its teachers, no people would be superior to us in that quality.

We have thus gone through the higher ranks of the empire; let us now descend to persons of inferior stations, and take a cursory view of the popular manners.

6. What do we find in some works of morality, translated from the Chinese? We find a set of infamous persons exercising the functions of the police; the innocent man condemned, beaten, whipped, and thrown into prison; the guilty pardoned, upon payment of a pecuniary fine, or punished, if the offended person happens to be the most powerful: in a word, all our public and domestic vices in a more hideous and disgusting point of view.

7. But we cannot acquire more just ideas of the popular manners than from the system of education. In what mode is the state of infancy managed in China? A child is obliged to remain sitting for hours together, without the least motion, in perfect silence, its arms folded over its breast, and in the attitude of the most profound thought and meditation. What effect can be expected from an habitual practice, so contrary to nature? A man of common sense would answer;—taciturnity, cunning, falsehood, hypocrisy, and all the train of vices that are peculiar to the cool, deliberate villain. He would think, that, in China, that amiable frankness which delights us so much in children; that artless ingenuousness which disappears as they advance in age, and which engages universal confidence in those few persons who are so fortunate as to preserve it; that all these charming qualities, in a word, were stifled there in the cradle.

8. “The code of Chinese politeness is very long.”—A man of common sense would infer from this, that politeness, in China, is not the simple and natural expression of attentive complaisance and general good-will, but merely a formal etiquette; and he would consider the cordial appearance of those dirty carmen who kneel to each other, who embrace, who address each other in the most affec-

tionate terms, and who lend each other a mutual assistance, as a kind of mummery practised among a ceremonious people.

9. "There is a tribunal established, to take cognizance of offences against custom."—A man of common sense would suspect, that justice would be more properly administered against these trifling offences, than in the civil tribunals against crimes of greater magnitude; and he would doubt much, whether the powers of the soul could be exalted, or the springs of genius brought into action, under the shackles of rites, ceremonies, and formalities. He would imagine, that a people devoted to ceremony must inevitably be narrow-minded; and, without ever having lived at Pekin or at Nankin, he would venture to assert, that there is no country in the world in which there is less regard for virtue, or more attention to the appearances of it.

10. All persons who have traded with the Chinese, are unanimous in declaring, that the utmost precautions are necessary, to prevent being duped by them. They are not even ashamed of their dishonesty.

A certain European, in his first voyage to this empire, bought some merchandize of a Chinese, who cheated him, both in the quality and the price. The goods had been carried on board of ship, and the bargain was completed. The European flattered himself, that he might possibly move the Chinese by moderate representations, and said to him, "Chinese, thou hast sold me bad goods."—"That may be," replied the Chinese, "but you must pay."—"Thou hast broken the laws of justice, and abused my confidence."—"That may be, but you must pay."—"But thou art then no better than a rogue or a thief."—"That may be, but you must pay."—"What opinion, then, must I carry back to my country, of those Chinese, so celebrated for wisdom? I shall say, that you are a set of rascals."—"That may be, but you must pay." The European having added to these reproaches every injurious epithet suggested to him by his rage, without being able to get any thing more than these cool words, pronounced with deliberation, "That may be, but you must pay,"—at length pulled out his purse, and laid down the money. The Chinese then taking it

up, said to him : “ European, instead of storming against me in the manner you have just been doing, would it not have been better for you to hold your tongue, and to do at first what you have been obliged to come to at last ? For, after all, what have you got by it ? ”

The Chinese, therefore, have not even that remaining sense of shame common to all professed rogues, who still will not submit to be told that they are so. They are, consequently, arrived at the last stage of depravity. Neither are we to imagine, that the instance here quoted is a singular one : these phlegmatic manners are the natural effect of that reserve which is inspired by the Chinese mode of education.

Neither is it to be urged, that the Chinese observe the rules of good faith among themselves, while they think themselves free from this obligation in their intercourse with strangers. This, certainly, is not, because it cannot be. A man cannot be alternately honest and dishonest. The man who has made it a practice to cheat foreigners, is too often exposed to the temptation of cheating his fellow-citizens, to be able constantly to resist it.

11. But it may be objected, that, according to these representations, China is a barbarous country. I answer, it is still worse. The half-civilized Chinese appear to me as savages, with pretensions to civilization : they are a people completely corrupt, a condition more wretched than that of simple and natural barbarism. The principle of virtue may unfold itself in a savage, by a series of favourable circumstances ; but we know of no circumstance, nor can we conceive any one, capable of rendering this important service to a Chinese, in whom this principle is not stifled, but totally obliterated. To the depravity and ignorance of these people, we may add their ridiculous vanity. Do they not say, that “ they have two eyes, while we have but one ; and that the rest of the world “ is blind ? ” This prejudice, their excessive population, the indifference they have for their sovereigns, which is probably the consequence of it, the obstinate attachment they have to their customs, the prohibition established by their laws of going out of their country ; all these circumstances must necessarily fix the Chinese in their present state, during an indefinite course of ages. The man

who thinks all knowledge centered in himself, or who despises what he is ignorant of, will never learn any thing. How is it possible to teach wisdom to him who supposes himself the only wise man? or, to improve him who esteems himself arrived at perfection? We will venture to foretel, that the state of the Chinese will never be meliorated, either by war, pestilence, famine, or even by tyranny, the most insupportable of all these calamities, and, for this very reason, more proper than all the others combined, to regenerate a nation by the violence of its oppression.

12. We know not whether the other nations of the universe have been of much advantage to the Chinese; but of what service have they been to the rest of the earth? It should seem that their encomiasts have affected to bestow upon them a degree of colossal magnitude, while they have reduced us to the low stature of pigmies. We, on the contrary, have been attentive to shew them as they are: and till they can bring us from Pekin, works of philosophy superior to those of Descartes and Locke; mathematical treatises that may be compared to those of Newton, Leibnitz, and their followers; pieces of poetry, eloquence, literature, and erudition, not unworthy the attention of our great writers, and the depth, graces, taste, and refinement, of which they shall be forced to acknowledge; till they can produce from thence, discourses upon morality, politics, legislation, finances, or commerce, which may contain only one single line of novelty to our men of genius; till they can exhibit vases, statues, pictures, musical instruments, or plans of architecture, fit for our artists to consider, or philosophical instruments and machines, in which the inferiority of ours shall be very palpable: till these things, I say, can be brought to us from China, we shall retort upon the Chinese his own saying; and we shall tell him, that he, perhaps, has but one eye, and that we have two: we shall carefully avoid insulting other nations which we may have left behind us in the career of science, and which are destined, perhaps, to get beyond us in some future time. Who is that Confucius of whom we hear so much talk, when compared to Sidney, or Montesquieu?

13. "The Chinese nation is the most laborious of any that is known."—We have no doubt of it; it is necessary they should labour, and that their labour should be



renewed. Are they not condemned to this, from the disproportion between the produce of their soil and the number of their inhabitants? We may, however, conclude from hence, that this population, so much boasted of, has its limits, beyond which it becomes a calamity, which deprives man of his natural rest, leads him on to desperate actions, and destroys in his mind the principles of honour, delicacy, and morality, and even the sentiment of humanity.

14. And shall we still persist, after all that has been said, in calling the Chinese nation “a people of sages?” A people of sages, among whom children are exposed and put to death! where the most infamous of all debaucheries is common! where man is mutilated! where the government knows not how to prevent or punish the crimes occasioned by a dearth! where the merchant cheats both the foreigner and the citizen! where the knowledge of the language is the ultimate point of science! where, for a succession of ages, a character and mode of writing has been adhered to, which is scarcely sufficient for the common transactions of life! where the inspectors of the manners are men destitute of honour and probity! where justice is, beyond comparison, more corrupt than it is among the most degenerate people! where the works of the legislator, to whom all persons pay homage, would not deserve a reading, if the ignorance of the period in which he lived were not an apology for his writings! where, from the emperor to the meanest of his subjects, we see nothing more than a continued series of rapacious beings devouring each other! in a word, where the sovereign only suffers some of his immediate dependants to enrich themselves, in order that he may acquire at once the spoils of the extortioner, and the title of avenger of his people.

15. If it be true, as we do not doubt it, that, in China, every thing which will not admit of a division, such as the sea, the rivers, the canals, navigation, fishing, and hunting, belongs in common to all; it must be acknowledged, that this is a very reasonable order of things. But is it possible that so numerous a people could patiently have abandoned their harvest for the nourishment of animals? And if persons of high rank had arrogated to themselves the exclusive enjoyment of the woods and waters, would

not such an encroachment have been followed by a speedy and just revenge? Let us endeavour not to confound the laws of necessity with the institutions of wisdom.

16. Have not the Chinese a set of monks more intriguing, more dissolute, more idle, and in greater number than ours? Monks! leeches! in a country where the most continued labour scarce furnishes the means of subsistence! "But the government despises them."—Say, rather, that it stands in awe of them, and that they are revered by the people.

17. It might, perhaps, be an advantageous circumstance, if, in all countries, as we are assured it is in China, the administration were attached to no doctrine, to no sect, nor to any particular mode of religious worship. This toleration, however, extends no farther than to the religious systems anciently settled in the empire. Christianity has been proscribed there, either because the mysterious foundation of its doctrine has disgusted men of weak understandings; or, because the intrigues of those who propagated it, have excited the alarms of a suspicious government.

18. In China, the merit of the son confers the rank of nobility on his father, with whom this prerogative ends. This is an institution which we cannot but applaud; although it must be acknowledged, that the system of hereditary nobility has its advantages. Where shall we find the descendant of an illustrious family so abject, as not to feel the obligations imposed upon him by a respectable name, or not to exert his efforts to make his conduct answerable to it? If we degrade the nobleman who has made himself unworthy of his ancestors, we shall be as wise upon this point as the Chinese.

19. There is nothing we are so desirous of as to commend. Accordingly, we confess there is a great deal of prudence in the mode which the Chinese use of punishing a neglect in paying the taxes. Instead of fixing in the house of the debtor a set of satellites, who seize upon his bed, his utensils, his furniture, his cattle, or his person; instead of dragging him into prison, or leaving him extended without bread, upon straw, in his cottage, after it has been stripped of every thing; it is certainly better to sentence him to feed the poor. But the man who

should infer the wisdom of China from this excellent custom alone, would be as inaccurate a logician as he, who, from our customs upon the same occasion, should conclude that we were a barbarous people. The censure which the Chinese deserve is softened as much as possible; and that country is exalted in order to depreciate ours. We are not directly told that we are mad; but it is declared, without hesitation, that it is at China that wisdom dwells: and immediately afterwards it is said, that, according to the last calculation, China contained about sixty millions of men capable of bearing arms. Extravagant panegyrist of China, do ye understand yourselves? Have you an exact conception of such a number as two hundred millions of individuals heaped one upon the other? Believe me, you must either subtract one-half or three-fourths of this enormous population; or, if you persist in giving credit to it, acknowledge, from the good sense you possess, and from the result of the experience that is submitted to your inspection, that there is not, and that there cannot be, either policy or manners in China.

20. "The Chinese extends his benevolence to the succeeding, as well as to the present generation."—"This is impossible. Children, fond of the marvellous, how long will ye be amused with such stories? Every nation which is constantly obliged to strive against want, cannot extend its thoughts beyond the present moment; and were it not for the honours publicly paid to ancestors, ceremonies which must excite and keep up in the minds of men, a faint idea of something beyond the grave, we ought to admit it as a demonstration, that if there be any part of the world where the sense of immortality, and the respect for posterity, are expressions destitute of meaning, it must be in China. We do not perceive that we carry every thing to the extreme, and that the only result of such extravagant opinion is palpable contradiction; that an excessive population is inconsistent with good morals; and that we decorate a depraved multitude with the virtues which belong only to a few distinguished persons.

The several arguments of the partisans, and of the calumniators of China, are now submitted to the judgment of our readers, to whom it is left to decide; for why should we be so presumptuous as to attempt to direct their

judgment? If we might be allowed to hazard an opinion, we should say, that although these two systems be supported by respectable testimonies, yet these authorities do not bear the marks of that great character that requires an implicit faith. Perhaps, in order to decide this matter, we must wait till some impartial and judicious men, and who are well versed in the Chinese writing and language, shall be permitted to make a long residence at the court of Peking, to go through all the provinces, to live in the country villages, and to converse freely with the Chinese of all ranks.

Whatever may have been the state of China when the Portuguese landed there, as they had no other object in view than to draw riches from thence, and to propagate their religion, had they found the best kind of government established in this country, they would not have profited by it. Thomas Perez, their ambassador, found the court of Peking disposed to favour his nation, the fame of which had spread itself throughout Asia. It had already attracted the esteem of the Chinese, which the conduct of Ferdinand Andrado, who commanded the Portuguese squadron, tended still further to increase. He visited all the coasts of China, and traded with the natives. When he was on the point of departure, he issued a proclamation in the ports he had put into, that if any one had been injured by a Portuguese, and would make it known, he should receive satisfaction. The ports of China were now upon the point of being opened to them: Thomas Perez was just about concluding a treaty, when Simon Andrada, brother to Ferdinand, appeared on the coasts with a fresh squadron. This commander treated the Chinese in the same manner as the Portuguese had, for some time, treated all the people of Asia. He built a fort without permission, in the island of Taman, from whence he took opportunities of pillaging, and extorting money from all the ships bound from, or to the ports of China. He carried off young girls from the coast; he seized upon the Chinese, and made slaves of them; he gave himself up to the most licentious acts of piracy, and the most shameful dissoluteness. The sailors and soldiers under his command followed his example. The Chinese, enraged at these outrages, fitted out a large fleet: the Portuguese defend-

ed themselves courageously, and escaped by making their way through the enemy's fleet. The emperor imprisoned Thomas Perez, who died in confinement, and the Portuguese nation was banished from China for some years. After this, the Chinese relaxed, and gave permission to the Portuguese to trade at the port of Sancian, to which place they brought gold from Africa, spices from the Molucca islands, and from Ceylon elephants teeth, and some precious stones. In return, they took silks of every kind, china, gums, medicinal herbs, and tea, which has since become so necessary a commodity to the northern nations of Europe.

The Portuguese contented themselves with the huts and factories they had at Sancian, and the liberty granted to their trade by the Chinese government, till an opportunity offered of establishing themselves upon a footing more solid, and less dependent upon the mandarins, who had the command of the coast.

A pirate, named Tchang-si-lao, whose successes had made him powerful, had seized upon the island of Macao, from whence he blocked up the ports of China, and even proceeded so far as to lay siege to Canton. The neighbouring mandarins had recourse to the Portuguese, who had ships in the harbour of Sancian; they hastened to the relief of Canton, raised the siege, and obtained a complete victory over the pirate, whom they pursued as far as Macao, where he slew himself.

The emperor of China, informed of the service the Portuguese had rendered him on this occasion, bestowed Macao on them, as a mark of his gratitude. They received this grant with joy, and built a town which became very flourishing, and was advantageously situated for the trade they soon after entered into with Japan.

*Arrival of the Portuguese at Japan. Mandarins, &c. of these islands.*

In the year 1542, it happened that a Portuguese vessel was fortunately driven by a storm on the coast of these celebrated islands. The crew were hospitably received, and obtained of the natives every thing they wanted to refresh, and refit them for the sea. When they arrived at Goa, they reported what they had seen, and informed the vice-

roy, that a new country, not less rich than populous, presented itself to the zeal of the missionaries, and the industry of the merchants. Both missionaries and merchants embarked without delay for Japan.

They found a great empire, which is, perhaps, the most ancient of any in the world, except that of China; its annals are not without a great mixture of fable, but it appears beyond a doubt, that in the year 660, Sin-chu founded the monarchy, which has ever since been continued in the same family. These sovereigns called Dairos, were at the same time the kings and pontiffs of the nation; and by virtue of these united powers, got the whole extent of the supreme authority into their hands. The person of the Dairos was sacred, they were considered as the descendants and representatives of the gods. The least disobedience to the most trifling of their laws was looked upon as a crime scarcely to be expiated by the severest punishment; nor was this confined to the offender alone, his whole family was involved in the consequences of his crime.

About the eleventh century, these princes, who, no doubt, were more jealous of the pleasing prerogatives of priesthood, than of the troublesome rights of royalty, divided the state into several governments, and intrusted the administration of them to such of the nobility as were distinguished for their knowledge and wisdom.

Thus the unlimited power of the Dairos suffered a considerable change. The affairs of the empire were left to fluctuate at all adventures. The restless and quicksighted ambition of their viceroys, took advantage of this inattention to bring about a variety of revolutions. By degrees they began to depart from the allegiance they had sworn to preserve. They made war upon each other, and even upon their sovereign. An absolute independence was the consequence of these commotions: such was the state of Japan, when it was discovered by the Portuguese.

The great islands of which this empire is composed, being situated in a tempestuous climate, surrounded by storms, agitated by volcanos, and subject to those great natural events which impress terror on the human mind, were inhabited by a people entirely addicted to superstition, but divided into several sects. That of Xinto is the ancient

established religion of the country : it acknowledges a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul ; and pays adoration to a multitude of gods, saints, or *camis*, that is to say, the souls of great men, who have been the support and ornament of their country. It is by the authority of this religion that the Dairo, high-priest of the gods, from whom he claimed his descent, had long reigned over his subjects with that despotic sway with which superstition governs the mind. Being both emperor and high-priest, he had rendered religion, in some respects, useful to his people, which is not absolutely impossible in countries where the sacerdotal and civil power are united in the same person.

It does not appear that the sect of Xinto has had the madness, which of all others is the most dangerous to morality, to fix a criminal stigma on actions innocent in themselves. Far from encouraging that gloomy fanaticism and dread of the gods, which is inspired by almost all other religions, the Xinto sect had applied itself to prevent, or at least to moderate, this disorder of the imagination, by instituting festivals, which were celebrated three times in every month. They were dedicated to friendly visits, feasts, and rejoicings. The priests of Xinto taught, that the innocent pleasures of mankind are agreeable to the deity, and that the best method of paying devotion to the *camis*, is to imitate their virtues, and to enjoy in this world that happiness they experience in another. In consequence of this tenet, the Japanese, after having put up their prayers in the temples, which are always situated in the midst of groves, resorted to courtezans, who commonly inhabited places consecrated to love and devotion, and composed a religious community under the direction of an order of monks, who received a share of the profits arising from this pious compliance with the dictates of nature.

The Budzoists are another sect in Japan, of which Budzo was the founder. Their doctrine was nearly the same with that of the sect of Xinto ; over which they hoped to gain a superiority by the severity of their morals. Beside the deity of the Xintoists, the Budzoists worshipped an Amida, a kind of mediator between God and mankind ; as well as other mediatorial divinities between men and Amida. The professors of this religion flattered them-

selves that they should prevail over the religion of Xinto by the multitude of their precepts, the excess of their austerity, their devotions, and mortifications.

The spirit of Budzöism is dreadful. It breathes nothing but penitence, excessive fear, and cruel severity. Of all fanaticisms, it is the most terrible. The monks of this sect oblige their disciples to pass one half of their lives in penance, to expiate imaginary sins; and inflict upon them the greatest part of that penance themselves, with a tyranny and cruelty, of which one may conceive an idea from the inquisitors in Spain; with this difference, that the Japanese fathers are themselves the executioners of these voluntary victims to superstition; whereas, the inquisitors are only the judges of those sins and punishments which they have themselves devised and invented. The Budzöist priests keep the minds of their followers in a continual state of torture, between remorse and expiations. Their religion is so overloaded with precepts, that it is not possible to observe them. They represent their gods as always offended, and thirsting for vengeance.

It may be readily imagined what effects so horrible a superstition must have on the character of the people, and to what degree of ferocity it hath brought them. The lights of a sound morality, a little philosophy, and a prudent system of education might have remedied these laws, this government, and this religion; which conspire to make mankind more savage in society with his own species, than if he lived in the woods, and had no companions but the monsters that roam about the deserts.

In China, they put into the hands of children books of instruction, which contain a detail of their duties, and teach them the advantages of virtue. The Japanese children are made to get by heart poems in which the actions of their forefathers are celebrated; a contempt of life is inculcated, and suicide is set up as the most heroic of all actions. These songs and poems, which are said to be full of energy and beauty, beget enthusiasm. The Chinese education tends to regulate the soul, and keep it in order: the Japanese, to inflame and excite it to heroism. These are guided through life by sentiment; the Chinese by reason and custom.



The Chinese aim only at truth in their writings, and place their happiness in a state of tranquillity. The Japanese are eager in the pursuit of pleasure, and would rather suffer, than be without feeling. In a word, the Chinese seem to wish to counteract the violence and impetuosity of the soul; the Japanese, to keep it from sinking into a state of languor and inactivity.

It is natural to imagine that people of this character must be fond of novelty. The Portuguese were accordingly received with all possible demonstrations of joy. All the ports were open to them. All the petty princes of the country invited them to their provinces: each contending who should give them the most valuable advantages, grant them the most privileges, and shew them the greatest civilities. These merchants established a prodigious trade. The Portuguese carried thither the commodities of India, which they brought from different markets; and Macao served as a repository for their European goods. Immense quantities of the productions of Europe and Asia were consumed by the Dairo, the usurpers of his rights, the nobles, and the whole nation. But what had they to give in return?

The country of Japan is in general mountainous, stony, and by no means fertile. Its produce in rice, barley, and wheat, which are the only crops it admits of, is not sufficient for the maintenance of its numerous inhabitants; who, notwithstanding their activity, foresight, and frugality, must perish with famine, if the sea did not supply them with great quantities of fish. The empire affords no productions proper for exportation; nor do the mechanic arts furnish any article of trade except works in steel, which are the best we are acquainted with.

Were it not for the advantages it derives from its mines of gold, silver, and copper, which are the richest in Asia, and perhaps in the whole world, Japan could not support its own expences. The Portuguese every year carried off quantities of these metals, to the amount of fourteen or fifteen millions of livres [on an average, about 600,000*l.*] They married also the richest of the Japanese heiresses, and allied themselves to the most powerful families.

WITH such advantages, the avarice as well as the ambition of the Portuguese might have been satisfied. They were masters of the coast of Guinea, Arabia, Persia, and the two peninsulas of India. *Extent of the Portuguese dominions in India.* They were possessed of the Moluccas, Ceylon, and the isles of Sunda, while their settlement at Macao ensured to them the commerce of China and Japan.

Throughout this immense tract, the will of the Portuguese was the supreme law. Earth and sea acknowledged their sovereignty. Their authority was so absolute, that things and persons were dependent upon them, and moved entirely by their directions. No nation or private person dared to make voyages, or carry on trade, without obtaining their permission and passport. Those who had this liberty granted them, were prohibited from trading in cinnamon, ginger, pepper, timber, iron, steel, lead, tin, and arms, of which the conquerors reserved to themselves the exclusive benefit. A number of valuable articles, by which so many nations have since enriched themselves, and which then bore a higher price on account of their novelty, were entirely engrossed by the Portuguese. In consequence of this monopoly, the prices of the produce and manufactures both in Europe and Asia were regulated at their discretion.

In the midst of so much glory, wealth, and conquest, the Portuguese had not neglected that part of Africa, which lies between the Cape of Good Hope and the Red sea, and has in all ages been famed for the richness of its productions. The possession of this country was on many accounts an important object: the Arabians had been settled there for several ages, and their numbers were greatly increased. They had formed along the coast of Zanguebar several small independent sovereignties, some of which made a considerable figure, and almost all of them were in good condition. The flourishing state of these settlements was owing to the mines of gold and silver, found within their respective territories, the produce of which enabled them to purchase the commodities of India. To possess themselves of this treasure, and to deprive their competitors of it, was looked upon by the Portuguese as an indispensable duty. Agreeable to this

principle, these Arabian merchants were attacked, and without much difficulty subdued, about the year 1508. Upon their ruin was established an empire, extending from Sofala as far as Melinda, of which the island of Mosambique was made the centre. This island is separated from the continent only by a narrow channel, and is no more than two leagues in circumference. Its port, which is excellent, and wants no advantage but that of a purer air, was fixed upon as a place for the vessels of the conqueror to put in at, and as a staple for all their merchandize. Here they used to wait for those settled winds, which at certain times of the year blow without intermission from the African to the Indian coasts, and which at other times blow in an opposite direction from the coasts of India to those of Africa.

*Degeneracy of  
the Portuguese  
in India.*

THESE successes, properly improved, might have formed a power so considerable, that it could not have been shaken ; but the vices and folly of some of their chiefs, the abuse of riches and of power, the wantonness of victory, the distance of their own country, changed the character of the Portuguese. Religious zeal, which had added so much force and activity to their courage, now produced in them nothing but ferocity. They made no scruple of pillaging, cheating, and enslaving, the idolaters. They supposed that the pope, in bestowing the kingdoms of Asia upon the Portuguese monarchs, had not with-holden the properties of individuals from their subjects. Being absolute masters of the eastern seas, they extorted a tribute from the ships of every country ; they ravaged the coasts, insulted the princes, and became, in a short time, the terror and scourge of all nations.

The king of Tidor was carried off from his own palace, and murdered, with his children, whom he had intrusted to the care of the Portuguese.

At Ceylon, the people were not suffered to cultivate the earth, except for their new masters, who treated them with the greatest barbarity.

At Goa they had established the inquisition, and whoever was rich became a prey to the ministers of that infamous tribunal.

Faria, who was sent out against the pirates from Malacca, China, and other parts, made a descent on the island of Calampui, and plundered the sepulchres of the Chinese emperors.

Souza caused all the pagodas on the Malabar coast to be destroyed; and his people inhumanly massacred the wretched Indians, who went to weep over the ruins of their temples.

Correa terminated an obstinate war with the king of Pegu, and both parties were to swear on the books of their several religions to observe the treaty. Correa swore on a collection of songs, and thought by this vile stratagem to elude his engagement.

Nuno d'Acunha resolved to make himself master of the island of Daman on the coast of Cambaya; the inhabitants offered to surrender it to him, if he would permit them to carry off their treasures. This request was refused, and Nuno put them all to the sword.

Diego de Siveira was cruising in the Red sea. A vessel richly laden saluted him. The captain came on board, and gave him a letter from a Portuguese general, which was to be his passport. The letter contained only these words: "I desire the captains of ships belonging to the king of Portugal to seize upon this Moorish vessel as a lawful prize."

In a short time the Portuguese preserved no more humanity or good faith with each other than with the natives. Almost all the states, where they had the command, were divided into factions.

A mixture of avarice, debauchery, cruelty, and devotion, prevailed everywhere in their manners. They had most of them seven or eight concubines, whom they kept to work with the utmost rigour, and forced from them the money they earned by their labour. Such treatment of women was very repugnant to the spirit of chivalry.

The chiefs and principal officers admitted to their table a multitude of those singing and dancing women, with which India abounds. Effeminacy introduced itself into their houses and armies. The officers marched to meet the enemy in palanquins. That brilliant courage, which had subdued so many nations, existed no longer among them. The Portuguese were with difficulty brought to

fight, except where there was a prospect of plunder. In a short time the king of Portugal no longer received the produce of the tribute, which was paid him by more than one hundred and fifty eastern princes. This money was lost in its way from them to him. Such corruption prevailed in the finances, that the tributes of sovereigns, the revenues of provinces, which ought to have been immense, the taxes levied in gold, silver, and spices, on the inhabitants of the continent and islands, were not sufficient to keep up a few citadels, and to fit out the shipping that was necessary for the protection of trade.

It would be a melancholy circumstance to fix our attention upon the decline of a nation, that should have signalized itself by exploits useful to mankind, that should have enlightened the world, or increased its own splendour and happiness, without being the scourge of its neighbours or of distant regions. But we should consider there is a great difference between the hero who spills his blood in the defence of his country, and a set of intrepid robbers, who expose themselves to death in a foreign soil, or who put its innocent and wretched inhabitants to the sword. "Serve or die," the Portuguese used insolently to say to every people they met in their rapid progress marked with blood. It is a grateful thing to behold the downfall of such tyranny; and a consolation to expect the punishment of those treacheries, murders, and cruelties, with which it has been preceded or followed. Far from regretting the overthrow of these savage conquerors, I should rather grieve at the wise policy of Juan de Castro, because it seemed to promise a revival of that spirit, which is called by the vulgar the heroism of Portugal; and which I myself, perhaps, led away by habit, have not treated with all the indignation I felt at it. If I have been guilty of this neglect, I ask pardon for it of God and of man.

Barbarous Europeans! the brilliancy of your enterprises has not imposed upon me, nor has your success prevented me from seeing the injustice of them. I have often embarked with you in imagination on board the ships that were to convey you to these distant regions; but when my fancy has landed me along with you, and that I have been witness of your enormities, I have withdrawn myself from

you ; I have thrown myself among your enemies ; I have taken up arms against you, and have imbrued my hands in your blood. I here make a solemn protestation of this ; and if I have ever ceased, for one moment, considering you as a multitude of famished and cruel vultures, with as little principles of morality and conscience as are to be found among these rapacious birds of prey,—may this work, and may my memory, if I may be allowed to hope that I shall leave one behind me, sink into the lowest contempt, and become an object of execration !

CASTRO was a man of much knowledge, considering the age he lived in. He possessed a noble and elevated soul ; and the study of the ancients had cherished in him that love of glory and of his country which was so common among the Greeks and Romans. *Brilliant admiration of Castro.*

In the beginning of his wife and glorious administration, Cojé-Sopha, minister of Mahmoud king of Cambaya, had inspired his master with a design of attacking the Portuguese. This man, whose father is said to have been an Italian, and his mother a Greek, had raised himself from the condition of a slave to the conduct of the state, and the command of armies. He had embraced mohammedism ; and though he had really no religion he knew how to avail himself of the aversion the people had conceived against the Portuguese on account of the contempt they shewed for the religions of the country. He engaged in his service experienced officers, veteran soldiers, able engineers, and even founders, whom he procured from Constantinople. His preparations seemed intended against the mogul or the Patans ; and, when the Portuguese least expected it, he attacked and made himself master of Diu, and laid siege to the citadel.

This place, which is situated on a little island upon the coast of Guzarat, had always been considered as the key of India in those times, when navigators never launched beyond the coast ; and Surat was the great staple of the east. From the arrival of Gama, it had been constantly an object of ambition to the Portuguese, into whose hands it fell at length in the time of d'Acunha. Maica-renhas, who was governor of it at the juncture we are

speaking of, and who should have had nine hundred men, had only three: the rest of his garrison, according to an abuse very common in those days, were employed in trade at the different towns upon the coast. He must have surrendered, if he had not received immediate assistance. Castro sent him a reinforcement under the command of his son, who was killed in the attack. Coje-Sophar shared the same fate; but his death did not slacken the operations of the siege.

Castro instituted funeral games in honour of those who had fallen in defence of their country. He congratulated their parents in the name of the government, and received congratulations himself on the death of his eldest son. His second presided at the funeral games, and marched immediately after for Diu, to deserve, as it were, the honours he had just been paying to his brother. The garrison repulsed the enemy in every attack, and signalized themselves every day by extraordinary actions. In the eyes of the Indians, the Portuguese were more than men. "Happily" said they, "Providence has decreed that there should be but as few of them as there are of tigers and lions, lest they should exterminate the human species."

Castro himself headed a larger reinforcement than he had sent. He threw himself into the citadel with provisions, and above four thousand men. It was debated whether they should give battle. The reasons on both sides were discussed. Garcias de Sa, an old officer, commanded silence; "ye have all spoken," said he, "now let us fight." Castro was of the same opinion. The Portuguese marched out to the enemy's intrenchments, and gained a signal victory. After having raised the siege, it was necessary to repair the citadel. They were in want of money, and Castro borrowed it on his own credit.

On his return to Goa, he wished to give his army the honours of a triumph after the manner of the ancients. He thought that such honours would serve to revive the warlike spirit of the Portuguese, and that the pomp of the ceremony might have a great effect on the imagination of the people. At his entry, the gates of the city were ornamented with triumphal arches; the streets were lined with tapestry; the women appeared at the windows in

magnificent habits, and scattered flowers and perfumes upon the conquerors; while the people danced to the sound of musical instruments. The royal standard was carried before the victorious soldiers, who marched in order. The viceroy, crowned with branches of palm, rode in a superb car: the generals of the enemy followed it, and after them the soldiers that had been made prisoners. The colours that had been taken from them, were carried in procession, reversed and dragging on the ground, and were followed by their artillery and baggage. Representations of the citadel they had delivered, and of the battle they had gained, enhanced the splendour of the spectacle. Verses, songs, orations, firing of cannon, all concurred to render the festival magnificent, agreeable, and striking.

Accounts of this triumph were brought to Europe. Men who formed pretensions to wit, condemned it as ridiculous; and bigots called it profane. The queen of Portugal said upon this occasion, "that Castro had conquered like a christian, and triumphed like a pagan hero."

THE vigour of the Portuguese, which Castro had re-animated, did not long continue. Corruption made daily advances among the citizens of every class. *The Portuguese grow effeminate, and are no longer formidable.*

One of the viceroys thought of setting up boxes in the principal towns, in which any person might put memorials and articles of intelligence. Such a method might be very useful, and tend to a reformation of abuses in an enlightened country, where the morals of the inhabitants were not totally spoiled; but among a superstitious and corrupt people it was not likely to be of any service.

The original conquerors of India were none of them now in being; and their country, exhausted by too many enterprises and colonies, was not in a capacity to replace them. The defenders of the Portuguese settlements were born in Asia: their opulence, the softness of the climate, the manner of living, and, perhaps, the nature of the food, had taken from them much of the intrepidity of their forefathers. At the same time that they gave themselves up to all those excesses which make men hated, they



had not courage enough left to inspire the people with terror. They were monsters ; poison, fire, assassination, every sort of crime was become familiar to them : nor were they private persons only who were guilty of such practices ; men in office set them the example ! They massacred the natives ; they destroyed one another. The governor, who was just arrived, loaded his predecessor with irons, that he might deprive him of his wealth. The distance of the scene, false witnesses, and large bribes, secured every crime from punishment.

The island of Amboyna was the first to avenge itself. A Portuguese had, at a public festival, seized upon a very beautiful woman ; and, regardless of all decency, had proceeded to the greatest of outrages. One of the islanders, named Genulio, armed his fellow-citizens ; after which, he called together the Portuguese, and addressed them in the following manner : “ to revenge affronts of so cruel  
 “ a nature as those we have received from you, would require actions, not words : yet we will speak to you.  
 “ You preach to us a deity, who delights, you say, in  
 “ generous actions ; but theft, murder, obscenity, and  
 “ drunkenness, are your common practice ; your hearts  
 “ are inflamed with every vice. Our manners can never  
 “ agree with yours : nature foresaw this, when she separated us by immense seas ; and ye have overleaped her  
 “ barriers. This audacity, of which ye are not ashamed  
 “ to boast, is a proof of the corruption of your hearts.  
 “ Take my advice ; leave to their repose these nations,  
 “ that resemble you so little ; go, fix your habitations  
 “ among those who are as brutal as yourselves ; an intercourse with you would be more fatal to us, than all the  
 “ evils which it is in the power of your God to inflict  
 “ upon us. We renounce your alliance for ever : your  
 “ arms are superior to ours ; but we are more just than  
 “ you, and we do not fear you. The Itoas are from this,  
 “ day your enemies ; fly from their country, and beware  
 “ how you approach it again.”

This harangue, which, thirty years before, would have brought on the destruction of Amboyna, was listened to with a degree of patience that fully demonstrated what change had taken place among the Portuguese.

EQUALLY detested in every quarter, they saw a confederacy forming to expel them from the East. All the great powers of India entered into the league, and for two or three years carried on their preparations in secret. The court of Lisbon was informed of them; and the reigning king Sebastian, who, if it had not been for his superstition, would have been a great prince, dispatched Ataida, and all the Portuguese who had distinguished themselves in the wars of Europe, to India.

*A general confederacy is formed against the Portuguese. The manner in which Ataida disconcerts it.*

The general opinion on their arrival, was, to abandon the distant settlements, and assemble their forces on the Malabar coast, and in the neighbourhood of Goa. Although Ataida was of opinion, that too great a number of settlements had been formed, he was not pleased with the appearance of sacrificing them. "Comrades," said he, "I mean to preserve all; and so long as I live, the enemy shall not gain an inch of ground." Immediately upon this, he sent succours to all the places that were in danger, and made the necessary dispositions for defending Goa.

The zamorin attacked Manjalor, Cochin, and Cananor. The king of Cambaya attacked Chaul, Daman, and Baidam. The king of Achem laid siege to Malacca. The king of Ternate made war upon the Portuguese in the Moluccas. Agalachem, a tributary to the mogul, imprisoned the Portuguese merchants at Surat. The queen of Garcopa endeavoured to drive them out of Onor.

Ataida, in the midst of the care and trouble attending the siege of Goa, sent five ships to Surat, which obliged Agalachem to set the Portuguese, whom he had seized, at liberty.

Thirteen ships were dispatched to Malacca; upon which the king of Achem and his allies abandoned the siege. Ataida ordered even those vessels to set sail, which were employed every year to carry tribute and merchandize to Lisbon. It was represented to him, that, instead of depriving himself of the assistance of men who were to go on board this fleet, he should preserve them for the defence of India. "We shall be enough without them," said he; "the state is in distress, and its expectations must not be disappointed." This reply surprised his oppo-

cuts; and the fleet sailed. At the time when the place was most vigorously pressed by Idalcan, Ataida sent troops to the succour of Cochin, and ships to Ceylon. The archbishop, whose authority was unlimited, interposed to prevent it. "Sir," replied Ataida, "you understand nothing of these affairs; content yourself with recommending them to the blessing of God." The Portuguese who came from Europe, exhibited prodigies of valour during this siege. It was oftentimes with difficulty that Ataida could restrain them from throwing away their lives. Many of them would sally out in the night, contrary to his orders, to attack the besiegers in their lines.

The viceroy did not depend so entirely on the force of his arms, as to reject the assistance of policy. He was informed, that Idalcan was governed by one of his mistresses, and that she was in the camp with him. Women who devote themselves to the pleasures of princes, are generally slaves to ambition, and unacquainted with those virtues which love inspires. The mistress of Idalcan suffered herself to be corrupted, and sold to Ataida her lover's secrets. Idalcan was aware of the treason, but could not discover the traitor. At last, after ten months spent in toil and action, his tents destroyed, his troops diminished, his elephants killed, and his cavalry unable to serve, this prince, overcome by the genius of Ataida, raised the siege, and retreated in shame and despair.

The brave Ataida demeaned his character, in corrupting the mistress of Idalcan; while she acted consistently with hers, in betraying her lover. How is it possible, that a woman who has publicly sold her honour to her sovereign, should hesitate to sell the honour of her sovereign, to him who knows how to set a proper price upon her perfidy? If a woman were capable of inspiring her king with great ideas, she would have a soul sufficiently exalted to disdain to become his courtesan; and whenever she condescends to accept of this humiliating title, or when she may, perhaps, become so abject as to think herself honoured by it, what has the nation to expect from her? Nothing but the corruption of manners in her lover, and in his favourites; the depredation of the treasury; the elevation of the most inadequate and most infamous men to the most important offices; circumstances which

are the disgrace of a long reign. Monarchs! a man of austere morals would have prohibited every unlawful connection; but if the laborious duties ye are exposed to, call for our indulgence, let your vices at least be concealed by great virtues. Have a mistress, if you must have one; but let her be a stranger to public affairs, and let her at least be confined to the temporary direction of your amusements.

Ataïda marched without delay to the assistance of Chaul, which was besieged by Nizam-al-Muluck, king of Cambaya, at the head of more than a hundred thousand men. The defence of Chaul had been conducted with as much intrepidity as that of Goa. It was followed by a great victory, which Ataïda, with a handful of men, obtained over a numerous army, disciplined by a long siege.

Ataïda, after this, marched against the zamorin, defeated and obliged him to sign a treaty, by which he engaged never to maintain any ships of war.

Such was the disastrous end of a conspiracy planned with a great deal of harmony, art, and secrecy, against a set of insolent and oppressive usurpers. The defeat of such a number of people excites our regret; and it were to be wished, that the virtues of Ataïda had been employed in a better cause. To conciliate the admiration with which the conduct of this hero inspires us, with the liberty of India, we could have wished that he had met with a glorious death.

The Portuguese became, throughout the East, what they were, under the immediate conduct of Ataïda. A single ship, commanded by Lopez Carasco, fought for three days successively against the whole fleet of the king of Achem. In the middle of the engagement, word was brought to Lopez's son, that his father was killed: "We have one brave man the less," said he; "we must conquer, or deserve to die like him." Saying this, he took the command of the ship, and, forcing his way in triumph through the enemy's fleet, anchored before Malacca.

Nor was courage the only virtue that revived among the Portuguese at this period; so powerful is the ascendant of a great man, even over the most corrupt nations. Thomas de Sowza had got, as a slave, a beautiful girl, who had not long before been promised to a young man

that was in love with her. Hearing of the misfortune of his mistress, he flew to throw himself at her feet, and partake of her chains. Sowza was present at their interview : they embraced, and melted into tears. " I give you your liberty," said the Portuguese general ; " go, and live happy elsewhere.

The management of the public money was likewise reformed by Ataida, who restrained those abuses which are most injurious to states, and most difficult to be restrained. But this good order, this returning heroism, this glorious moment, did not survive his administration.

*State into which  
Portugal falls,  
when subdued by  
Spain.*

GOVERNMENT is always a very complicated machine, which has its beginning, its progress, and its period of perfection, when it is well planned ; on the other hand, when it is defective in its source, it has its beginning, its progress, and its period of extreme corruption. In either of these cases, it comprehends such an infinite number of objects, both within and without, that, when its dissolution happens, either from the inability of the chief, or the violence of the subjects, it unavoidably brings on the most terrible consequences. If the impatience of the subjects should break the yoke, the weight of which they have been no longer able to bear, a nation advances more or less rapidly towards anarchy, wading through streams of blood. If it should arrive, by imperceptible degrees, at this fatal period, through the indolence or weakness of the sovereign, unable to hold the reins of empire, the effusion of blood is spared, but the nation falls into a state of annihilation. It is nothing more than a carcase, all the parts of which fall into putrefaction, are separated and transformed into a mass of worms, which perish themselves, after they have devoured every thing. In the meanwhile, the neighbouring nations are hovering round it, as we see birds of prey hovering about a carcase in the fields. They easily get possession of a defenceless country ; and the people then pass into a worse state than when they first emerged from barbarism. The laws of the conqueror clash with those of the people conquered ; their respective customs, manners, and religion, are all in opposition to each other ; and

their language is confounded with a foreign idiom. Hence arises a chaos, the end of which it is difficult to foretel; a chaos, which cannot be dissipated, till after several centuries are elapsed; while the traces it leaves behind, are never to be entirely effaced, by a succession of the most fortunate events.

Such is the picture of Portugal at the death of Sebastian, till the kingdom was gradually reduced under the dominion of Philip the second. From this era, the Portuguese in India ceased to consider themselves as of the same country. Some made themselves independent; others turned pirates, and paid no respect to any flag. Many entered into the service of the princes of the country; and these almost all become ministers or generals, so great were the advantages this nation still maintained over those of India. No Portuguese pursued any other object than the advancement of his own interest; there was no zeal, no union for the common good. Their possessions in India were divided into three governments, which gave no assistance to each other, and even clashed in their projects and interests. Neither discipline, subordination, nor the love of glory, animated either the soldiers or the officers. Men of war no longer ventured out of the ports; or, whenever they appeared, were badly equipped. Manners became more and more depraved. Not one of their commanders had power enough to restrain the torrent of vice; and the majority of these commanders were themselves corrupted. The Portuguese, at length, lost all their former greatness, when a free and enlightened nation, actuated with a proper spirit of toleration, appeared in India, and contended with them for the empire of that country.

It may be affirmed, that, at the time when Portugal first made its discoveries, the world was very little acquainted with the political principles of trade, the real power of different states, the advantages of conquest, the manner of establishing and preserving colonies, and the benefits the mother-country might derive from them.

*Detail of the other causes that brought on the ruin of the Portuguese in India.*

It was a wise project, to endeavour to find a passage by Africa to go to India, and to bring merchandize from

thence. The benefits which the Venetians derived by less direct roads, had justly excited the emulation of the Portuguese; but it was proper there should be some limits to so laudable an ambition.

This small nation becoming on a sudden mistress of the richest and most extensive commerce of the globe, soon consisted of nothing else but merchants, factors, and sailors, who were destroyed by long voyages. Thus the Portuguese lost the foundation of all real power, which consists in agriculture, natural industry, and population; and there was, consequently, no proportion between their commerce and the means of keeping it up.

They carried these destructive measures still further; and, animated with the rage of conquest, extended themselves over a vast tract of land, which no European nation would have been able to preserve, without impairing its own strength.

Thus this small country, which of itself was not very populous, constantly exhausted itself in soldiers, sailors, and inhabitants, sent to supply the colonies.

The spirit of religious intoleration that prevailed among them, would not allow them to admit into the class of their own citizens the people of the East and of Africa; and they were, therefore, obliged to be perpetually at war with their new subjects.

As the government soon changed its schemes of trade into projects of conquest, the nation, which had never been guided by the true commercial spirit, soon assumed that of rapine and plunder.

Time-pieces, fire arms, fine cloths, and other articles, which have been since carried into India, not being then brought to that degree of perfection they have lately acquired, the Portuguese could not carry any thing there but money. They soon grew tired of this, and took away from the Indians by force what they had before obtained by purchase.

Then was to be seen throughout the kingdom of Portugal the utmost profusion of riches, joined to the most extreme poverty. The only opulent persons were those who had some employment in India; while the husbandman, who found no one to assist him in his toil, and the artists, who were unable to procure workmen, being

soon compelled to forego their several occupations, were reduced to the lowest state of misery.

All these misfortunes had been foreseen. When the discovery of India engaged the attention of Portugal, that court flattered itself that the mere appearance of its ships in that mild climate would ensure the possession of it; that the trade of these countries would prove as inexhaustible a source of riches to the nation as it had been to those people who had hitherto been masters of it; and that, by the treasure arising from it, the state, notwithstanding its small extent of territory, would become equal in strength and splendour to the most formidable powers. There were some persons, however, who were not misled by these delusive hopes. The most penetrating and moderate of the ministers ventured to affirm, that the consequence of running in search of rich minerals and glittering merchandize, would be an inattention to objects of real advantage, agriculture, and manufactures; that wars, shipwrecks, epidemical diseases, and other accidents, would weaken the whole empire beyond recovery; that the state, thus carried out from its centre by the impulse of an extravagant ambition, would, either by force or art, attract the subjects to the most distant parts of Asia; that even if the enterprise succeeded, it would raise a powerful confederacy, which it would be impossible for the crown of Portugal to defeat. Attempts were in vain made, some time after this, to convince these discerning men of their error, by shewing them that the Indians were subdued, the Moors repulsed, and the Turks defeated; and by exhibiting the tide of wealth that flowed into Portugal. Their opinions were too well-grounded in experience, to be shaken by the report of these flattering successes. They still insisted that a few years would discover the folly of pushing these pursuits to extremity, and that they must inevitably lead to a corruption of morals, and end in ravages and universal confusion. Time, the great arbiter of political matters, soon confirmed their predictions.

Of all the conquests which the Portuguese had made in the seas of Asia, they possess none at present but Macao, part of the island of Timor, Daman, Diu,

*Present state of the Portuguese in India.*



and Goa. The connections which these wretched establishments kept up with each other, and those which they had with the rest of India and with Portugal, were not maintained with any kind of spirit. They have been still more contracted, since the establishment at Goa of an exclusive company for China and the Mosambique.

At present, Macao sends to Timor, to Siam, and to Cochin China, some few small vessels of little value. It sends five or six to Goa laden with merchandize that has been refused at Canton; and the greatest part of which belongs to Chinese merchants. These last ships are laden, in return, with sanders wood, Indian saffron, ginger, pepper, linen, and indeed with all the materials that Goa has been able to collect on the coast of Malabar, or at Surat, with a sixty gun ship, two frigates, and six sloops, fitted out as sloops of war.

It follows from this state of inactivity, that the colony cannot send annually to Europe more than three or four cargoes, the value of which does not exceed 3,175,000 livres [132,291l. 13s. 4d.] even since the year 1752, when this commerce was freed from the restraints of monopoly, except in the articles of sugar, snuff, pepper, saltpetre, pearls, sanders, and aloes wood, which the crown continues to buy up, and to sell exclusively. The vessels laden with these materials, used formerly to put in at Brazil, or in Africa, where they sold part of their merchandize: but for some time past they have been obliged to return directly to the mother-country.

Such is the declining state into which the Portuguese affairs in India are fallen, from that pinnacle of glory to which they had been raised by the bold adventurers who discovered, and the intrepid heroes who conquered, that country. The scene of their glory and opulence is become that of their ruin and disgrace. Formerly, a despotic and cruel viceroy, and since the year 1774, a governor-general, with the same powers and disposition; a turbulent and undisciplined militia, consisting of six thousand two hundred and seventy soldiers, blacks and others; magistrates of open and avowed venality; an unjust and rapacious administration: all these several kinds of oppression, which would be sufficient to annihilate the most virtuous of all people, cannot possibly regenerate an idle, de-

graded, and corrupt nation. Let the court of Lisbon at length open its eyes; and in a little time its flag, which has been so long forgotten, will resume some share of consideration. Portugal can never expect to rank with the great commercial powers; but may quietly ensure its own riches. We shall now see, in the example of the Dutch, whose enterprises will be the next subject of our inquiry, what a small nation can effect, when its speculations are directed by patience, reflection, and economy.

## BOOK II.

### THE SETTLEMENTS, WARS, POLICY, AND TRADE, OF THE DUTCH IN THE EAST INDIES.

THE republic of Holland, from its earliest rise, exhibits a scene of grandeur to all nations; and must remain an object of the highest concern to us, and of curiosity to our remotest posterity. It has distinguished itself by its industry and enterprising spirit, in all parts; but more especially on the seas, and on the continent of India. Before we attend the Dutch in their progress to these extensive regions, let us trace their history to its earliest æra. Such a retrospect is peculiarly proper in a work of this nature, as it will comprehend at one glance, all those characteristic marks by which the genius of a nation is distinguished. It is necessary that a reader who reflects may be enabled to judge for himself, whether the original state of this nation were such as afforded a presage of its future power; and whether the heroic associates of Civilis, who defied the Roman power, transfused their spirit into those brave republicans, who, under the auspices of Nassau, opposed the dark and odious tyranny of Philip the second.

*Ancient revolutions in Holland.*

IT is a fact established by the best historical authority, that in the century preceding the christian era, the Battæ, dissatisfied with their situation in Hesse, settled upon the island formed by the Waal and the Rhine, in a marshy soil, which had few or no inhabitants. They gave the name of Batavia to their new country. Their government was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Their chief was, properly speaking, nothing more than a principal citizen, whose office was rather to advise than to command. The principal men who exercised jurisdiction, and commanded the troops in their respective districts, were chosen, as well as the kings, in a general assembly. A hundred persons, selected from among the people, presided over every county, and acted as chiefs in the different hamlets. The whole nation was, in some sort, an army always in readiness. Each family composed a body of militia, which served under a captain of its own choosing.

Such was the state of Batavia when Cæsar passed the Alps. This Roman general defeated the Helvetians, several tribes of the Gauls, the Belgæ and Germans, who had crossed the Rhine, and extended his conquests beyond that river. In consequence of this expedition, the boldness and success of which were equally astonishing, the protection of the conqueror was courted on all sides.

Some writers, too zealous for the honour of their country, affirm that the Batavians entered into an alliance with Rome; but the fact is, they submitted, on condition that they should be governed by their own laws, pay no tribute, and be obliged only to perform military services.

Cæsar soon distinguished the Batavians from the other nations that were subdued by the Romans. This conqueror of the Gauls, when, by Pompey's influence, he was recalled to Rome, and refused to obey the senate's orders; when, relying on the absolute authority which his conduct had at length given him over the legions and auxiliaries, he attacked his enemies in Spain, Italy, and Asia: then it was, that, sensible of the Batavians having a principal share in his victories, he gave them the glorious appellation of "the friends and brethren of the Roman people."

After this, irritated by the unjust proceedings of certain

governors, they obeyed the dictates of that noble impulse, so becoming men of spirit who are prompted to take arms to revenge an insult. They shewed themselves enemies as formidable as they had been faithful allies: but these troubles subsided, and the Batavians were pacified, though not subdued.

When Rome, after having risen to a pitch of greatness unknown before, and which has never since been equalled by any state, no longer retained those manly virtues and austere principles which had laid the foundation of her glory; when her laws had lost their force, her armies their discipline, and her citizens the love of their country; the barbarians, who, by the terror of the Roman name, had been driven back to the north, where they had been compelled to remain, poured like a torrent into the southern countries. The empire was torn in pieces, and the finest provinces became a prey to those people whom the Romans had always either degraded or oppressed. The Franks, in particular, seized upon the countries belonging to the Gauls, and Batavia, a part of that extensive and famous kingdom, which was founded by these conquerors in the fifth century.

The new monarchy experienced those inconveniences which are almost inseparable from rising states, and are indeed too frequently felt in the best established governments. It was sometimes under the dominion of a single person, and at others was subject to the caprice of a number of tyrants. It was constantly engaged either in foreign wars, or exposed to the rage of intestine dissensions. Sometimes it made the neighbouring states tremble for their safety, but much more frequently suffered from the incursions of the northern people, who ravaged its provinces. It was equally the victim of the weakness of several of its princes, and of the unbounded ambition of their favourites and ministers. The overbearing spirit of the pontiffs undermined the power of the throne, and their insolence brought both the laws and religion into disgrace. Anarchy and tyranny followed each other so close, that even the most sanguine persons despaired of seeing better times. The glorious era of Charlemagne's government was only a transient gleam of light. As his great actions were the effect of his genius, and not in the least owing to the in-

fluence of any good institutions, after his death, affairs returned to the state of confusion from which they had been retrieved by his father Pepin, and more particularly by his own endeavours. The French monarchy, the limits of which he had extended too far, was divided. One of his grandsons, to whom Germany was allotted, obtained also Batavia, to which the Normans in their excursions had lately given the name of Holland.

In the beginning of the tenth century, the German branch of the Carolinians became extinct. The other princes of France having neither the courage nor power to assert their rights, the Germans easily disengaged themselves from a foreign yoke. Those of the nation, who, by virtue of a delegated power from the monarch, governed the five circles, of which the state was composed, chose a chief out of their own body. This chief, fearing lest these powerful men might be tempted to throw off their dependence, if any severer conditions were required of them, contented himself with their fidelity and homage, and exacted only such services as they were compelled to by the feudal laws.

At this memorable juncture, the counts of Holland, who, as well as the rest of the provincial chiefs, had hitherto exercised a precarious and dependent authority, obtained the same rights as the other great vassals of Germany: and as they afterwards enlarged their territories by conquest, marriages, and grants from the emperors, they in time became totally independent of the empire. They were not equally successful in their unjust attempts against the public liberty. Their subjects were not to be intimidated by force, seduced by flattery, or corrupted by profusion. War and peace, taxes, laws, and treaties, were managed by the three united powers of the count, the nobles, and the towns. The republican spirit still prevailed in the nation, when, by some extraordinary events, it fell under the dominion of the house of Burgundy, the power of which, though before considerable, was greatly strengthened by this union.

Those who had the sagacity to investigate probabilities, foresaw, that this state, which was formed as it were by the gradual accretion of many others, would one day be of great weight in the political system of Europe. The

genius of its inhabitants, its advantageous situation, and its real strength, afforded a most certain prospect of its future greatness. These projects and expectations, which were just upon the point of being fulfilled, were disappointed by an event, which, though it happens every day, never fails to baffle the designs of ambition. The male line in that house became extinct; and Mary, who was sole heiress to its dominions, by her marriage in 1477, transferred to the house of Austria the advantages that had been gained by several successful struggles, a variety of intrigues, and some acts of injustice.

At this era, so famous in history, each of the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries had particular laws, extensive privileges, and almost a distinct government of its own. The excellent principle of union, which equally contributes to the welfare and security both of empires and republics, was universally disregarded. The people having been, from time immemorial, accustomed to this state of confusion, had no idea that it was possible to enjoy a more rational form of administration. This prejudice was of so long a standing, so generally adopted, and so firmly established, that Maximilian, Philip, and Charles, the three Austrian princes who first inherited the dominions of the house of Burgundy, thought it prudent not to attempt any innovation. They flattered themselves that some happier conjuncture might enable their successors to execute with safety a plan which they could not even attempt without danger.

At this time a great change was pre- *Rise of the republic of Holland.*  
paring in the minds of men in Europe. The revival of letters, the extension of commerce, the invention of printing, and the discovery of the compass, brought on the era when human reason was to shake off the yoke of some of those prejudices which had gained ground in the barbarous ages.

The intelligent part of the world were for the most part cured of the Romish superstitions. They were disgusted at the abuse the popes made of their authority; the contributions they raised upon the people; the sale of indulgences; and more particularly at those absurd refinements with which they had disguised the plain religion of Jesus Christ.

But these discerning people were not the first who attempted a revolution. This honour was reserved for a turbulent monk, whose barbarous eloquence roused the northern nations. The most enlightened men of the age contributed to undeceive the rest. Some of the European princes embraced the reformed religion; others held communion with the church of Rome. The former found no difficulty in bringing over their subjects to their opinions; while the latter had much difficulty to prevent theirs from embracing the new doctrines. They had recourse to a variety of measures, which were too often pursued with rigour; and the spirit of fanaticism, which had destroyed the Saxons, the Albigenes, and the Hussites, was revived. Gibbets were erected, and fires kindled again, to check the progress of the new doctrine.

No sovereign was so ready to make use of these expedients as Philip II. His tyranny was felt in every part of his extensive monarchy; fanaticism tempted him to persecute those who fell under the denomination of heretics or infidels. The Low Countries were more particularly the seat of these cruelties; and millions of citizens were condemned to the scaffold. The people revolted; and the same scene was renewed which the Venetians had displayed to the world many centuries before, when flying from oppression, and, finding no retreat upon land, they sought an asylum upon the waters. Seven small provinces lying on the northern side of Brabant and Flanders, which were rather overflowed than watered by large rivers, and often covered by the sea, the violence of which was with difficulty restrained by dikes; having no wealth but such as arose from a few pasture lands, and a little fishing; formed one of the richest and most powerful republics in the world; which may, perhaps, be also considered as the model of commercial states. The first efforts of this united people had not the desired success; but, though they were frequently defeated, victory at length declared itself for them. The Spanish troops they had to encounter, were the best in Europe, and at first gained several advantages. But by degrees the new republicans recovered their losses. They resisted with firmness; and, gaining experience from their own miscarriages, as well as from the example of their enemies they at length became their superiors in the art of

war: and the necessity they lay under of disputing every inch of ground in so confined a country as Holland, gave them opportunities of improving the art of fortifying a country or a town in the best manner.

The weak state of Holland, at its first rise, obliged it to seek for arms and assistance from every quarter where there was any prospect of obtaining them. It granted an asylum to pirates of all nations, with a view of employing them against the Spaniards; and this was the foundation of its naval strength. Wise laws, an admirable regularity, a constitution which preserved equality among mankind, an excellent police, and a spirit of toleration, soon erected this republic into a powerful state. In the year 1590, the Hollanders more than once humbled the pride of the Spanish flag. They had already established a kind of trade, the most suitable that could be to their situation. Their vessels were employed, as they are still, in carrying the merchandize of one nation to another. The Hanse towns, and some towns in Italy, were in possession of this carrying trade: and the Hollanders, in competition with them, by their frugality soon gained the advantage. Their ships of war protected their merchantmen. Their merchants grew ambitious of extending their commerce, and got the trade of Lisbon into their hands, where they purchased Indian goods, which they sold again to all the states of Europe.

Philip II having made himself master of Portugal forbade his new subjects in 1594, to hold any correspondence with his enemies. This arbitrary prince did not foresee that this prohibition, which he thought must weaken the Hollanders, would in fact render them more formidable. Had not these discerning navigators been excluded from a port, upon which the whole success of their naval enterprises depended, there is reason to believe that they would have contented themselves with the large commerce they carried on in the European seas, without thinking of sailing to remoter climates. But as it was impossible to preserve their trade without the productions of the East, they were forced to go beyond a sphere which was, perhaps, too confined for a situation like theirs, and resolved to seek these riches at the fountain head.



*The first voyages of the Hollanders to India.* It appeared to be the best plan to fit out ships, and send them to India: but the Hollanders wanted pilots who were acquainted with the seas, and factors who understood the commerce of

Asia. they were alarmed at the danger of making long voyages where the enemy were master of the coasts, and of having their vessels intercepted during a passage of six thousand leagues. It was judged more advisable to attempt the discovery of a passage to China and Japan through the northern seas, which would be a shorter, as well as a more safe voyage. The English had made the attempt in vain; and the Hollanders renewed it with no better success.

While they were engaged in this enterprize, Cornelius Houtman, a merchant of that nation, a man of sagacity and of a daring spirit, being detained at Lisbon for debt, gave the merchants at Amsterdam to understand, that, if they would procure his enlargement, he would communicate to them many discoveries he had made, which might turn to their advantage. He had, in fact, informed himself of every particular relating the passage to India, and the manner of carrying on trade in those parts. His proposals were accepted, and his debts discharged. The information he gave proving answerable to the expectations he had raised, those who had released him from his confinement formed an association under the name of the Company of distant countries, and in the year 1595 gave him the command of four vessels to conduct him to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

The principal object of this voyage was to observe the coasts, the inhabitants, and the trade, of different places, keeping clear, as much as possible, of the Portuguese settlements. Houtman reconnoitred the coasts of Africa and Brazil; made some stay at Madagascar, touched at the Maldives, and visited the islands of Sunda: where, finding the country abounding in pepper, he bought a quantity of it, together with some others of the most valuable spices. His prudence procured him an alliance with the principal sovereign of Java; but the Portuguese, notwithstanding they were hated, and had no settlement upon the island, created him some enemies. Having got the better in some

skirmishes he was unavoidably engaged in, he returned with his small squadron to Holland ; where, though he brought little wealth, he raised much expectation. He brought back along with him some negroes, Chinese, and inhabitants of Malabar, a young native of Malacca, a Japanese, and Abdul a pilot of the Guzarat, a man of great abilities, and perfectly well acquainted with the coast of India.

The account given by Houtman, and the discoveries made in the course of the voyage, encouraged the merchants of Amsterdam to form the plan of a settlement at Java ; which, at the same time that it would through the trade of pepper into their hands, place them near the islands that produce more valuable spices, and facilitate their communication with China and Japan, would fix them at a distance from the centre of that European power, which they had the most reason to dread in India. Van Nec, who, in 1598, was sent upon this important expedition with eight vessels, arrived at the island of Java, where he found the inhabitants unfavourably disposed towards his nation. They fought and negotiated by turns. Abdul the pilot, the Chinese, and, above all, the hatred that prevailed against the Portuguese, proved of service to the Dutch. They were permitted to trade, and, in a short time, fitted out four vessels, laden with a quantity of spices, and some linens. The admiral, with the rest of his fleet, sailed to the Moluccas, where he learnt that the natives of the country had forced the Portuguese to abandon some places, and that they only waited for a favourable opportunity of expelling them from the rest. He established factories in several of these islands, entered into a treaty with some of the sovereigns, and returned to Europe loaded with riches.

It is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at his return. The success of his voyage raised a fresh emulation. Societies were formed in most of the maritime and trading towns in the Low Countries. These associations soon became so numerous, that they proved detrimental to each other ; for the rage of purchasing raised the value of commodities to an exorbitant degree in India ; and the necessity of selling them made them bear a low price in Europe. They were on the point of being ruined by their own efforts, and by the want of power in each of them to resist a formidable enemy fully bent upon their destruction, when the

government, which is sometimes wiser than individuals, opportunely stepped in to their assistance.

*Establishment of the India company* IN 1602, the states general united these different societies into one body, to which they gave the name of the East India company. It was invested with

authority to make peace or war with the eastern princes, to erect forts, choose its own governors, maintain its own garrisons, and nominate officers for the conduct of the police, and the administration of justice.

This company, which had no parallel in antiquity, and was the pattern of all succeeding societies of the same kind, began with great advantages. The private associations which had been previously formed, proved of service to it by their misfortunes, and even by their mistakes. The great number of vessels which they fitted out had contributed to make all the branches of trade perfectly understood ; to form many officers and seamen ; and to encourage citizens of repute to undertake these foreign expeditions ; persons only of no estimation or fortune having been exposed in the first voyages.

So many united assistances could not fail of being improved to advantage when prosecuted with vigour ; and, accordingly, the new company soon acquired a considerable degree of power. It was a new state, erected within the state itself, which enriched it, and increased its strength abroad ; but might, in time, weaken the influence of the democratical principle which inspires the love of equality and economy, of the laws, and of one's own countrymen.

Soon after its establishment, the company fitted out for India fourteen ships and some yachts, under the command of admiral Warwick, whom the Hollanders look upon as the founder of their commerce, and of their powerful colonies in the East. He built a factory in the island of Java, and secured it by fortifications ; he likewise built another in the territories of the king of Johor ; and formed alliances with several princes in Bengal. He had frequent engagements with the Portuguese, in which he had almost always the advantage. In those parts where the Portuguese had appeared in the character of merchants only,

he found it necessary to remove the prejudices they had raised against his countrymen, whom they had represented as a set of banditti, avowed enemies to all regal authority, and addicted to every kind of vice. The behaviour of the Hollanders and the Portuguese soon convinced the people of Asia which of these nations had the advantage over the other in point of morality. A bloody war soon ensued between these two powers.

How great must have been the astonishment of the Indians at the sight of these contests? What joy must have filled their hearts, when they saw their tyrants mutually bent upon each others destruction? With what transports of gratitude must they not have blessed that Providence, that was avenging the evils they had sustained? And how far must not their hopes have been carried, while the blood that was spilt on each side of them, was either that of an oppressor, or of an enemy?

THE Portuguese had on their side *Wars between the advantage of a thorough knowledge the Hollanders of these seas; they were accustomed to and Portuguese. the climate, and had the assistance of* several nations, which, though they hated them, were compelled through fear to fight for their tyrants. The Hollanders were animated by the urgent sense of their necessities; by the hopes of procuring an absolute and lasting independency, which was still disputed with them; by the ambition of establishing a vast commerce upon the ruins of that of their old masters; and by a hatred which a difference in religious opinions had rendered implacable. These passions, at the same time that they inspired all the activity, strength, and perseverance, necessary for the execution of their great designs, did not prevent them from taking their measures with precaution. Their humanity and honesty attached the people to their cause; and many of them soon declared against their ancient oppressors.

The Hollanders were continually sending over fresh colonists, ships, and troops, while the Portuguese were left without any forces but their own. Spain did not send them fleets of merchantmen, or grant them the protection of the squadron which had hitherto been kept in India; she neither repaired their places of strength,

nor renewed their garrisons. It should seem that she wanted to humble her new subjects, whom she thought not so submissive as might be wished, and to perpetuate her authority by exposing them to repeated misfortunes. She proceeded still further; and to prevent Portugal from having any resources in itself, she seized upon its inhabitants, and sent them to Italy, Flanders, and other countries where she was at war.

Notwithstanding this, the scale continued even for a long time, and the success was various on both sides. Nor is this in the least surprising. The Portuguese, on their arrival in India, had nothing to encounter at sea but a few weak vessels, ill built, ill armed, and ill defended; nothing by land but effeminate men, voluptuous princes, and dastardly slaves: whereas, those who came to wrest the sceptre of Asia out of their hands, had vessels to board of the same construction as their own; regular fortresses to assault, and Europeans to conquer and subdue, who were grown haughty by a long series of victories, and by being the founders of an immense empire.

The time was now come, when the Portuguese were to expiate their perfidy, their robberies, and their cruelties: and the prediction of one of the kings of Persia was fulfilled, who asking an ambassador just arrived at Goa, how many governors his master had beheaded since the establishment of his power in India? received for answer, "None at all." "So much the worse," replied the monarch; "his authority cannot be of long duration in a country where so many acts of outrage and barbarity are committed."

It does not however appear, in the course of this war, that the Hollanders possessed that daring rashness, that unshaken intrepidity, which had marked the enterprises of the Portuguese; but there was a consistency and unremitting perseverance observable in all their designs. Often repulsed, but never discouraged, they renewed their attacks with fresh forces, and with better concerted measures. They never exposed themselves to the hazard of a total defeat. If, in any engagement, their ships had suffered, they retreated; and as their constant object was never to lose sight of their commercial interest, the vanquished fleet, while it was repairing on the coasts belong-

ing to some of the Indian princes, purchased merchandize there, and returned to Holland. By this method the company acquired a new fund, which enabled them to undertake fresh enterprizes. If the Hollanders did not always perform great actions, they never attempted useless ones. They had neither the pride nor the vain-glory of the Portuguese, who had frequently engaged in war, rather perhaps through the love of fame than of power. The Hollanders steadily pursued their first plan, without suffering themselves to be diverted from it either by motives of revenge, or ruinous projects of conquest.

In the year 1601 they endeavoured, and in 1607 they renewed, the attempt, to open a communication with the ports belonging to the vast empire of China, which at that time was cautious of admitting strangers. The Portuguese found means, by bribery and the intrigues of their missionaries, to get the Hollanders excluded. They resolved to extort by force what they could not obtain by treaty, and determined to intercept the vessels belonging to the Chinese. This piratical proceeding did not answer their expectations. A Portuguese fleet failed from Macao to attack the pirates who thought proper to retire. The inequality of their numbers, the impossibility of refitting in seas where they had no shelter, and the fear of disgracing their nation in the eyes of a great empire, whose good opinion it was their interest to preserve; all these considerations determined them to decline the fight: but this was only for a short time.

Some years after, the Hollanders laid siege to a place, of the importance of which they had gained information. The enterprize did not succeed; but as they never lost any advantage that could be obtained by their armaments, they sent that which they had employed against Macao to form a colony in the Pescadore isles. These are rocks where no water is to be had in dry seasons, and no provisions at any time. These inconveniencies were not counterbalanced by any solid advantages, because the people of the neighbouring continent were forbidden, on the severest penalties, to hold any correspondence with strangers who might become dangerous so near the coasts. The Hollanders had determined to abandon a settlement which they despaired of making useful, when, in the

year 1624, they were invited to fix at Formosa, and had assurances given them that the Chinese merchants would be allowed full liberty to go there and trade with them.

*The Hollanders form a settlement at Formosa.* THIS island, though it lies opposite to the province of Fokien, at the distance of only thirty leagues from the coast, was not subject to the dominion of the Chinese, whose genius does not incline them to conquest, and who, through a humane and ill-judged policy, would rather suffer a decrease of population, than transplant their supernumerary subjects to the neighbouring countries. Formosa was found to be a hundred and thirty or forty leagues in circumference. Its inhabitants, to judge from their manners and appearance, seemed to be descended from the Tartars in the most northern part of Asia: and probably found their way through the country of Corea. They lived chiefly by fishing and hunting, and scarce wore any covering.

The Hollanders, having, without difficulty, informed themselves of every particular that prudence suggested, thought it most advisable to fix their settlement on a small island that lay contiguous to the larger one. This situation afforded them three considerable advantages; an easy defence, if hatred or jealousy should incline their neighbours to molest them; the convenience of a harbour formed by the two islands; and the facility of maintaining a safe communication with China during the monsoons: advantages which they could not have found in any other position they might have chosen.

The new colony insensibly gained strength without attracting any notice, till it rose at once to a degree of consequence that astonished all Asia. This unexpected prosperity was owing to the conquest of China by the Tartars. Thus it is that torrents enrich the vallies with the stores they carry down from the desolated mountains. Above a hundred thousand Chinese, who resolved not to submit to the conqueror, fled for refuge to Formosa. They brought along with them that industry which is peculiar to their character, the manner of cultivating rice and sugar, and attracted an infinite number of vessels from their own nation. In a short time the island became

the centre of all the correspondence that was carried on between Java, Siam, the Philippine islands, China, Japan, and other countries; and in a few years was considered as the most considerable mart in India. The Hollanders flattered themselves with the prospect of still greater advantages, when fortune deceived their expectations.

A Chinese, named Equam, of obscure birth, whose turbulent disposition had made him turn pirate, had attained, by the superiority of his talents, to the rank of high-admiral. He defended his country against the Tartars for a considerable time, but seeing his master obliged to submit, he endeavoured to make terms for himself with the conquerors. He was decoyed to Pekin, where he was seized, and condemned by the usurper to perpetual imprisonment, in which he is supposed to have died of poison. Coxinga saved himself on board his father's fleet, vowed eternal enmity to the oppressors of his family and country, and concluded that he should be able to take the severest revenge upon them, by making himself master of Formosa. He made a descent upon it, and the minister Hambroeck was taken prisoner in the attack.

Hambroeck, being appointed with some other prisoners to be sent to the fort of Zealand to prevail with his countrymen to capitulate, called to mind the example of Regulus; he exhorted them to be firm, and used every argument to persuade them, that if they strenuously persevered, they would oblige the enemy to retire. The garrison being aware that this generous man would, on his return to the camp, fall a sacrifice to his magnanimity, used their utmost efforts to detain him. Their remonstrances were seconded by the tenderest solicitations of two of his daughters, who were in the citadel. His answer was, "I have pledged my honour to return to my confinement: I hold myself obliged to perform my promise. My memory shall never be sullied with the reproach, that, out of regard to my own safety, I was the cause of severer treatment, or perhaps of death, to the companions of my misfortune." After this heroic speech, he calmly returned to the Chinese camp, and the siege began.

Notwithstanding the fortifications were in a bad condi-



tion, and the fort ill-stored with ammunition and provisions; notwithstanding the garrison was weak, and the succours sent to attack the enemy had retreated with disgrace, Coycet the governor made an obstinate defence. In the beginning of the year 1662, being forced to capitulate, he repaired to Batavia, where his superiors had recourse to those iniquitous state intrigues which are frequently practised in all governments. They degraded him, in order to prevent any suspicion that the loss of so important a settlement had been owing to their own folly or negligence. The attempts made to recover it proved unsuccessful; and the Hollanders were at last reduced to the necessity of carrying on a trade with Canton on the same conditions, and under the same restrictions as other nations.

It may appear somewhat singular, that since the year 1683, when Formosa fell under the dominion of China, no Europeans have ever attempted to form any settlement there, upon the same conditions at least, as that of the Portuguese at Macao. But besides that the suspicious temper of the nation to which that island belongs, gives no room to expect such an indulgence from them, one may venture to pronounce that such an enterprise would be a bad one. Formosa was a place of importance only so long as the Japanese had a communication with it and so long as its produce was allowed a free importation into Japan.

*Trade of the*      *This* empire of Japan had given re-  
*Hollanders to*      *fuge* in the year 1600 to some Hollanders  
*Japan.*                *who* had been shipwrecked on the island  
                             *of* Bango: but it was not till 1609, that  
*it* received some ships of the Dutch East India company.

About a century before this, the government of Japan had been changed. A magnanimous people had been made furious by a tyrant. Taycosama, who from a soldier became a general, and from a general an emperor, had usurped the whole power, and abolished all the rights of the people. Having stripped the Dairo of the little remains of his authority, he had reduced all the petty princes of the country under his subjection. Tyranny is arrived at its height, when it establishes despotism by law. Taycosama went still further, and confirmed it by sanguine

nary laws. His civil legislation was actually a code of criminal prosecutions, exhibiting nothing but scaffolds, punishments, criminals, and executioners.

The Japanese, alarmed at this prospect of slavery, had recourse to arms. Torrents of blood were shed throughout the empire: and though liberty might be supposed to be superior in courage to tyranny, the latter triumphed over it, and became still more ferocious, when animated by the spirit of revenge. An inquisition, public as well as private, dismayed the citizens: they became spies, informers, accusers, and enemies to each other. An error in the administration of the police, was construed into a crime against the state; and an unguarded expression was made high-treason. Prosecution assumed the character of legislation. Three successive generations were doomed to welter in their own blood; and rebel parents gave birth to a proscribed posterity.

During a whole century, Japan resembled a dungeon filled with criminals, or a place of execution. The throne, which was raised upon the ruins of the altar, was surrounded with gibbets. The subjects were become as cruel as their tyrant. They sought, with a strange avidity, to procure death, by committing crimes which were readily suggested, under a despotic government. For want of executioners, they punished themselves for the loss of liberty, or revenged themselves of tyranny, by putting an end to their own existence. To enable them to face death, and to assist them in suffering it, they derived new courage from that system of Christianity which the Portuguese had introduced among them.

The oppressions the Japanese laboured under, afforded an opportunity for the professors of this new worship to make numerous proselytes. The missionaries who preached a suffering religion, were listened to with attention. In vain did the doctrine of Confucius try to gain reception among a people who bordered upon China. This doctrine was too simple and too rational for islanders, whose imagination, naturally restless, was still more heated by the cruelties of the government. Some erroneous tenets of Christianity, which bore a considerable affinity to those of the Budzoists, and the penances, equally enjoined by the two systems, procured the Portuguese mis-

sionaries several profelytes. But, setting aside this resemblance, the Japanese would have chosen to embrace Christianity, merely from a motive of hatred to the prince.

If the new religion was discountenanced at court, it could not fail to meet with a favourable reception in the families of the dethroned princes. It added fresh fuel to their resentment : they were fond of a strange God whom the tyrant did not love. Taycosama ruled with a rod of iron, and persecuted the Christians as enemies to the state. He proscribed the doctrines imported from Europe, and this proscription made them strike the deeper root. Piles were kindled, and millions of victims threw themselves into the flames. The emperors of Japan transcended those of Rome, in the art of persecuting the Christians. During the space of forty years, the scaffolds were stained with the innocent blood of martyrs. This proved the seed of Christianity, and, at the same time, of sedition. Near forty thousand Christians, in the kingdom or province of Arima, took up arms, in the name, and for the name of Christ ; and defended themselves with such fury, that not a single person survived the slaughter occasioned by persecution.

The navigation, trade, and factories, of the Portuguese had sustained themselves during this great crisis. The government and the people had, however, for a long time, been dissatisfied with them : they had incurred the suspicion of administration, by their ambition, by their intrigues, and, perhaps, by their secret conspiracies ; and had rendered themselves odious to the people, by their avarice, their pride, and their treachery. But as the habit of purchasing the mercantile articles they brought, was now become general, and that these goods could not be obtained through any other channel, they were not excluded from Japan till the end of the year 1638, when other merchants were in a situation to supply their place.

The Hollanders, who had for some time entered into competition with them, were not involved in the disgrace. As these republicans had never shown themselves ambitious of interfering with the government ; as they had suffered their artillery to be employed against the Christians ; as they were at war with the proscribed nations ; as their

strength was not thoroughly known, and they appeared to be reserved, pliant, modest, and entirely devoted to commerce; they were tolerated; though, at the same time, they were subjected to great restraints. Three years after, whether it were that they became actuated by the spirit of intrigue and dominion, or, which is more probable, that no conduct whatever could prevent the Japanese from harbouring suspicions, they were deprived of the liberty and the privileges they enjoyed.

Ever since the year 1641, they have been confined to the artificial island of Desima, raised in the harbour of Nangasacke, and which has a communication with the city bridge. As soon as they arrive, their ships are stripped, and their powder, muskets, swords, guns, and even rudder, carried ashore. In this kind of imprisonment, they are treated with a degree of contempt which is beyond conception; and can transact no business, but with commissaries appointed to regulate the price and the quantity of their merchandize. It is impossible, that the tameness with which they have endured this treatment more than a century, should not have lessened them in the eyes of a nation that is witness of it; and that the love of gain should have produced such an extreme insensibility to insults, without tarnishing their character.

European cloths, silks, printed linens, sugar, woods for dying, and some spices, chiefly pepper and cloves, are the articles carried to Japan. The ordinary returns were very considerable at the time that an indefinite liberty of trade was allowed. When it was subjected to restrictions, no more than three ships were annually fitted out for Batavia, and these were soon reduced to two. Since the last twelve years, there are even but one or two trifling cargoes sent alternately, whether it be, that the buyer has insisted upon this diminution, or whether the seller may have been led to it by the little benefit arising from this commerce. According to regulations made, all the articles together do not produce more than one million one hundred thousand livres [45,833l. 6s. 8d.]; but although these regulations may not possibly be put rigorously in force, still it is affirmed, that the profit does not exceed fifty thousand livres [2083l. 6s. 8d.] It would be more considerable, if the Dutch were not obliged to send an-

nually to the capital of the empire, an ambassador loaded with presents. The payments are made with the best sort of copper in the world, which is consumed in Bengal, on the coast of Coromandel, and at Surat : they are also made with camphire, which is used in Europe, after it has been purified at Amsterdam.

The agents of the company are more fortunate than the company they serve. By a kind of hospitality peculiar to Japan, courtezans are given to them immediately on their arrival, whom they may keep till they go away again. These girls are not only devoted to their pleasures, but also contribute to make their fortunes ; since it is through their means, that the tortoise-shell, of which the Japanese fabricate their most esteemed jewels, is introduced into the country ; as likewise the camphire of Sumatra, which being naturally perfect enough not to stand in need of the operation of fire, is thought worthy to be employed as incense.

They receive in exchange a very pure kind of gold, which, as well as the merchandize, passes through the hands of their mistresses, whose skill and probity in this double negotiation are equally attested.

The trade of the Chinese, who, except the Hollanders, are the only foreigners admitted into the empire, is not more extensive than theirs, and subjected to the same restrictions. Ever since the year 1688, they are confined during the continuance of the sale of their goods, without the walls of Mangasque, in a kind of prison, which is divided into several huts, surrounded with a palisade, and defended by a good ditch, and a guard placed at every avenue. These precautions have been taken, in consequence of a discovery, that some works in favour of Christianity had been sold, together with books of philosophy and morality. The European missionaries had ordered some people of Canton to circulate them ; and the desire of gain betrayed them into a piece of chicanery, which has been severely punished.

It is natural to suppose, that those who have changed the ancient government of the country into the most arbitrary tyranny upon earth, would look upon all intercourse with strangers as dangerous to their authority. There is the more reason for this conjecture, as the inha-

bitants are all forbidden, on pain of death, to go out their country. This rigorous edict is become the fundamental maxim of the empire.

Thus the inhuman policy of the state has deprived it of the only means of acquiring a milder temper, by softening the national character. The Japanese, fiery as his climate, and restless as the ocean that surrounds him, required, that the utmost scope should be given to his activity which could only be done by encouraging a brisk trade. To prevent the necessity of restraining him by punishments, it was requisite to keep him in exercise by constant labour, and to allow his vivacity an uninterrupted career abroad, when it was in danger of kindling the flame of sedition at home. That energy of mind which has degenerated into fanaticism, would have been improved into industry; contemplation would have changed into action; and the fear of punishment into the love of pleasure. That hatred of life which torments the Japanese, while he is enslaved, oppressed, and kept in continual fears by the rigour of the laws, against which he is perpetually struggling, would have given way to the spirit of curiosity, that would have induced him to traverse the ocean, and visit foreign nations. By a frequent change of place and climate, he would insensibly have altered his manners, opinions, and characters; and this alteration would have been as fortunate for him, as it is for the generality of people. What he might have lost by this intercourse as a citizen, he would have gained as a man: but the Japanese are become tygers, under the scourge of their tyrants.

Whatever may be said in praise of the Spartans, the Egyptians, and other distinct nations, who have owed their superior strength, grandeur, and permanency, to the state of separation in which they kept themselves, mankind has received no benefit from these solitary institutions. On the contrary, the spirit of intercourse is useful to all nations, as it promotes a mutual communication of their productions and knowledge. In a word, if it were useless or pernicious to some particular people, it was necessary for the Japanese. By commerce, they would have become enlightened in China, civilized in India, and divested of all their prejudices among the Europeans.

*The Moluccas submit to the Dutch.*

THE Dutch had the good fortune to meet with resources which indemnified them for the loss they had sustained at Japan. They had not yet entered into commerce with these, the most remarkable islands in the torrid zone, when they attempted to secure to themselves the trade of the Moluccas. The Portuguese, who had long been in possession of them, were obliged to share their advantages with their masters, the Spaniards; and, at length, to give up the trade almost entirely to them. The two nations, divided in their interests, and perpetually at war with each other, because the government had neither leisure nor skill to remove their mutual antipathy, joined to oppose the subjects of the United Provinces. The latter, assisted by the natives of the country, who had not yet learned to fear or hate them, by degrees gained the superiority. The ancient conquerors were driven out about the year 1621; and their place was supplied by others equally rapacious, though less turbulent, and more enlightened.

As soon as the Dutch had established themselves firmly at the Moluccas, they endeavoured to get the exclusive trade of spices into their own hands: an advantage which the nation they had just expelled had never been able to procure. They skilfully availed themselves both of the forts they had taken by storm, and of those they had imprudently been suffered to erect, to draw the kings of Ternate and Tidore, who were masters of this Archipelago, into their scheme. These princes found themselves obliged to consent, that the clove and nutmeg trees should be rooted up in the islands that were still under their dominion. The first of these sceptered slaves, in consideration of this great sacrifice, received a pension of 70,950 livres [2956l. 5s.]; and the other, one of about 13,200 [549l.] A garrison of seven hundred men was appointed to secure the performance of this treaty: and so low an ebb is the power of these kings reduced by war, tyranny, and misfortunes, that these forces would be more than sufficient to keep them in this state of dependence, if it were not necessary to have an eye upon the Philippine islands, whose vicinity constantly occasions some alarm. Although the inhabitants be prohibited

from carrying on any navigation, and that no foreign nation be admitted among them, the Dutch trade there is in a languishing state, as they have no means of exchange, nor any silver but what they carry over to pay their troops, their agents, and the pensions. This administration, deducting the small profits, costs the company 154,000 livres [6416l. 13s. 4d.] per annum.

The tree that bears the clove, looks like the birch-tree; and its bark is thin and smooth, like that of the beech. Its trunk, which is composed of an exceeding hard wood, does not rise to any height, but divides itself into several principal branches, the boughs of which are covered with leaves and flowers in the month of March. The leaves are always placed opposite to each other, dotted, smooth, and not serrated, almost resembling, in form and consistence, those of the laurel. The flowers, disposed in a corymbus terminalis, have each of them a long quadrified calix, which bears as many white petals, and a great number of stamina. The pistil enclosed at the bottom of this calix, becomes, along with it, an oviform fruit, filled up with a single kernel, and known by the name of the mother clove. This same calix, gathered before the unfolding of the petals, and the fecundation of the pistil, is, properly speaking, the clove; the gathering of which is the principal object of the cultivation of the clove tree; which begins in October, and ends in February. When the cloves have acquired a reddish cast, and a certain degree of firmness, they are made to fall from the tree, by the help of long reeds, or by strongly shaking the branches, and are received into large cloths, or upon the ground, after it has been swept clean. They are afterwards exposed, for a few days, to smoke, upon hurdles covered with large leaves. This fumigation, to which the heat of a stove might, perhaps, be substituted with advantage, is followed, by drying the cloves in the sun: this operation is thought to be completed, when, upon raising with the nail part of the outward covering of the clove, the inside displays a beautiful red colour.

The clove tree requires a rich and fertile soil. Its growth is assisted, by giving it room, and by pulling up the weeds and shrubs that shoot out in its neighbourhood.



This circumstance has given occasion to some travellers to say, that it attracted to itself all the nutritious juices of the soil it springs from. If it were left to itself, it would rise to a considerable height; but a low stem, sending off branches at its origin, is preferred, for the facility of gathering the fruit.

The cloves which have been left upon the tree, continue growing till they are half an inch thick. They are then fit for germination, provided they be immediately put into the ground; and they produce the clove tree, which flowers only at the end of eight or nine years. These fruits, or mother-cloves, though inferior to the common sort, are not without their value. The Dutch preserve them in sugar; and, in voyages, eat them after meals, to promote digestion; or make use of them, as an agreeable remedy for the scurvy.

The clove, to be in perfection, must be full-sized, heavy, oily, and easily broken; of a fine smell, and a hot aromatic taste, so as almost to burn the throat: it should make the fingers smart when handled, and leave a greasy moisture upon them when pressed. The principal use of it is for culinary purposes. In some parts of Europe, and in India particularly, it is so much prized, that it is thought to be an indispensable ingredient in almost every kind of nourishment. It is there put into food, liquors, wines; and enters likewise into the composition of perfumes. It is little used in medicine; but there is an oil extracted from it, which is in considerable repute.

The company have allotted the inhabitants of Amboyna four thousand parcels of land; on each of which they were at first allowed, and, about the year 1720, compelled to plant a hundred and twenty-five trees, amounting, in the whole, to five hundred thousand. Each tree yields annually, on an average, upwards of two pounds of cloves: and, consequently, the collective produce must weigh more than a million.

The cultivator is paid with the specie that is constantly returned to the company, and with some blue and unbleached cottons which are brought from Coromandel. This small trade might, in some measure, have been increased, if the inhabitants of Amboyna, and the small islands that depend upon it, would have attended to the culture of pepper and indigo, which has been tried with

success. Miserable as these islanders are, they still remain in a state of indolence, because they have not been tempted by an adequate reward for their labours.

The administration is somewhat different in the islands of Banda, which are thirty leagues distant from Amboyna. There are five of these islands; two of which are uncultivated, and almost uninhabited: and the other three claim the distinction of being the only islands in the world that produce the nutmeg.

The nutmeg-tree, in its size and foliage, resembles the pear-tree. Its trunk, which is not high, is covered, as well as the branches, with a smooth, ash-coloured bark. Its leaves, alternately disposed, are oval, sharp-pointed, green on the upper surface, whitish on the lower, and, when bruised, diffuse an aromatic smell. The flowers, the botanical characters of which have not yet been sufficiently observed, are succeeded by the fruit, which is covered with an external green covering, similar in its form to that of the common walnut, but more fleshy, and full of juice. This external covering, when grown ripe, acquires a deep yellow colour; and, as it opens, discovers an internal membranous coat, of a beautiful red colour, slit through in different places, and known by the name of mace, which lies immediately over the thin and brittle shell that encloses the nutmeg. This is the time to gather it, otherwise the mace would get loose, and the nutmeg would lose that oil which preserves it, and in which its excellence consists. The nutmegs that are gathered before they are perfectly ripe, are preserved in vinegar or sugar, and are admired only in Asia.

It is nine months before the fruit comes to perfection. After it is gathered, the outer rind is stripped off, and the mace separated from it, which is laid in the sun to dry. The nuts require more preparation. They are spread upon hurdles, or dried for six weeks by a slow fire, in sheds erected for that purpose. They are then separated from the shell, and thrown into lime-water, which is a necessary precaution to preserve them from worms.

The nutmeg differs in goodness, according to the age of the tree, the soil, the exposition, and method of culture. This tree, contrary to the clove, delights in a damp soil, overgrown with weeds, and even shaded by

large trees, provided it be not stifled by them. Under their shelter it thrives very well, and bears the colds which are sometimes felt on the tops of the mountains. The round nutmeg is preferred to that which is oblong, though they are only different conformations of the same fruit. That fruit is more particularly esteemed which is fresh, moist, heavy, of a good smell, and an agreeable though bitter flavour, and which yields an oily juice upon being pricked. The immoderate use of this spice brings on paroxysms of madness, and sometimes occasions death. In proper quantities, it facilitates digestion, expels wind, strengthens the bowels, and stops the dysentery. The congealed oil which is drawn by expression from the nutmegs rejected at the market, and that which is furnished by the mace, are used externally in disorders of the nervous system.

A wild kind of clove-tree is found at Amboyna, which differs from the former, in growing to a greater height, in having its leaves much longer, and its matrices very oblong, rough upon the surface, and of a disagreeable taste. The islands of Banda furnish also five or six species of wild nutmeg trees, which the Dutch have neglected to destroy, because the fruit they bear, being but slightly aromatic, and of no value in trade, is merely an object of curiosity.

If we except this valuable spice, the islands of Banda, like all the Moluccas, are barren to a dreadful degree. What they produce in superfluities, they want in necessities. The land will not bring forth any kind of corn: and the pith of the sago serves the natives of the country instead of bread.

As this food will not be sufficient for the Europeans who settle in the Moluccas, they are allowed to fetch provisions from Java, Macassar, or the extremely fertile island of Bali. The company itself carries some merchandize to Banda.

This is the only settlement in the east Indies that can be considered as an European colony; because it is the only one where the Europeans are proprietors of lands. The company, finding that the inhabitants of Banda were savage, cruel, and treacherous, because they were impatient under their yoke, resolved to exterminate them.

Their possessions were divided among the white people, who got slaves from some of the neighbouring islands to cultivate the lands. These white people are for the most part creoles, or malcontents, who have quitted the service of the company. In the small isle of Rosinging, there are likewise several banditti, whom the laws have branded with disgrace, and young men of abandoned principles, whose families wanted to get rid of them: so that Banda is called the "island of correction." These wretches live but a short time here: but the other islands of Banda are not much less fatal. It is on account of the loss of so great a number of men, that attempts have been made to transfer the culture of the nutmeg to Amboyna; and the company were likewise probably urged to this by the two other powerful motives of economy and security. But the experiments that have been made have proved unsuccessful, and matters remain in their former state.

To secure exclusively to themselves the produce of the Moluccas, which are, with good reason, styled the "gold mines" of the company, the Dutch have pursued all the means that an enlightened spirit of avarice could suggest to them; and have been assisted in their designs by nature.

The earthquakes, which are frequent and dreadful in these latitudes, render the navigation dangerous. They swallow up every year banks of sand in these seas, and form new ones in their stead. These revolutions, the frequency and effects of which are exaggerated by policy, must of course keep at a distance the foreign navigator, who is in want of the necessary assistance to guide his ship with safety.

This first circumstance in favour of an exclusive trade, is strengthened by another, perhaps still more efficacious. During a considerable part of the year, the ships driven off by winds and opposite currents, cannot land at the Moluccas; and are therefore obliged to wait for the favourable season succeeding these tempestuous times. But at this period, a number of experienced and vigilant guarda costas take possession of this ocean, now become quiet, in order to keep off or seize upon all the ships that may have been brought there by the allurements of gain.

It is in these calm seasons that the governors of Am-

boyna and Banda are employed in going over the islands, in which the company, at the first dawn of their power, destroyed all their spices. The odious business they are engaged in obliges them to maintain a perpetual struggle with the liberality of nature, and to cut up the trees wherever they sprout. They are forced to renew their expeditions every year, because the earth, rebelling against the hands that lay it waste, seems obstinately to strive against the wickedness of men; and because the nutmeg and the clove, springing up afresh under the knife that extirpates them, deceive that cruel spirit of rapaciousness, which is an enemy to every thing that does not grow for itself. These abominable excursions begin and end with festivals, the particulars of which would make a man of the least feeling shudder, if I could prevail upon myself to mention them.

The intent of all civil and religious festivals, from their first institution down to our times, either in the huts of the savage, or in civilized towns, is to renew the remembrance of some favourable period, or some fortunate event, and they are each of them marked with their peculiar characters. The priest ushers in the day with the ringing of his bells; he opens the gates of his temple; he summons the citizens to the foot of the altar; he arrays himself in his most sumptuous garments; he raises his hands towards heaven; he implores his mercy for the future, and expresses his gratitude for the past, in songs of gladness. On going out of the temple, the civil festival begins, and joy is displayed under another aspect. The tribunals of justice are shut. The noise which is no longer heard in the shops, breaks forth in the streets and public places. The sound of music invites to the sprightly dance, in which persons of both sexes and of various ages mix together. The ordinary strictness of parents is relaxed; and wine flows abundantly on all sides. At length the absence of the sun is supplied by illuminations, which restore to pleasure that freedom that the light of the day seemed to preclude. With what impatience are not these days of public rejoicing expected? They are talked of long before they arrive; and become the general topic of conversation for a long time after they have been celebrated. Thus it is, that if the people be wretched, they are made to for-

get their daily afflictions ; if they be happy, thus it is that their affection for the authors of their felicity is redoubled ; and that the spark of enthusiasm is kept alive, either by the remembrance of the good sovereigns by whom they have been governed heretofore, or by the recollection of the brave and virtuous ancestors from whom they are descended. It should seem, however, that at the Moluccas, the festivals instituted by the Dutch have had no other view, but to perpetuate the memory of the atrocious acts they have committed, and to cherish the sentiment of vengeance in the heart. It is only under the empire of demons, that festivals should be gloomy : but such is the aversion of man for labour, that the people delight in all kinds of festivals, whether they be melancholy or cheerful.

The Dutch, in order that they might the more effectually grasp, in process of time, the monopoly of the spice trade, have formed two settlements, one at Timor, the other at Celebes.

THE first of these islands is sixty leagues long, and from fifteen to eighteen broad. It is divided into several sovereignties ; in which there are numbers of Portuguese. These conquerors, who at their first arrival in India had advanced with the utmost intrepidity and most amazing celerity, and had pursued a long and dangerous career with a rapidity which nothing could stop ; who were so well accustomed to acts of heroism, that they performed the most arduous enterprises with ease ; these conquerors, I say, when they were attacked by the Dutch, at the time that their whole empire, grown too large and tottering under its own weight, was tumbling to ruin on all sides, displayed none of those virtues which have laid the foundation of their power. When they were dispossessed of a fort, driven out of a kingdom, or dispersed in consequence of a defeat, they should have sought an asylum among their brethren, and should have rallied under standards that had hitherto been invincible ; either to put a stop to the progress of the enemy, or to recover their settlements : but so far were they from forming a resolution so generous, that they solicited some employment, or

*The Dutch form  
a settlement at  
Timor.*

penſion, from thoſe very Indian princes whom they had ſo often injured. Thoſe who had contracted a habit of effeminacy and idleneſs above the reſt, retreated to Timor, which, being a poor iſland, where no works of induſtry were carried on, would ſcreen them, they thought, from the purſuit of an enemy intent upon uſeful conqueſts. They were however deceived. In the year 1613 they were driven from the town of Cupan by the Dutch, who found a fort there, which they have ever ſince gariſoned with fifty men. The company ſends ſome coarſe linens there every year, and receives in return, wax, tortoiſeſhell, ſanders wood, and cadiang, a ſmall ſpecies of bean, commonly uſed by the Dutch on ſhip-board, by way of varying the food of the crew. All theſe objects employ one or two ſloops, which are diſpatched from Batavia: nothing is either gained or loſt by this ſettlement; the profits juſt answer the expences. The Dutch would have abandoned Timor long ago, if they had not been apprehenſive that ſome active nation might fix there, and avail themſelves of the opportunities that ſituation would give them to diſturb the trade of the Moluccas. It was the ſame cautious principles which drew them to Celebes.

*The Dutch make themſelves maſters of Celebes*      THIS iſland, which is about a hundred and thirty leagues in diameter, is very habitable, though ſituated in the centre of the torrid zone. The heats are allayed by copious rains and cooling breezes. The inhabitants are the braveſt people in the ſouth of Aſia; their firſt attack is furious; but, after a conteſt of two hours, a total want of courage takes place of this extraordinary impetuouſity: the intoxicating fumes of opium, which are certainly the cauſe of this terrible fury, go off, after they have exhauſted their ſtrength in tranſports that approach to madneſs. The kris, which is their favourite weapon, is a foot and a half long; it is ſhaped like a poniard, and the blade is ſerpentine. They never carry more than one to battle; but in private quarrels two are neceſſary; they parry with that in the left hand, and attack the adverſary with the other. The wounds made by this weapon are very dangerous, and the duel moſt commonly ends in the death of both the combatants.

The inhabitants of Celebes are rendered active, industrious, and robust, by a rigid education. Every hour in the day their nurses rub them with oil, or lukewarm water. These repeated unctions encourage nature to unfold her powers with freedom. They are weaned at an year old, an idea prevailing, that if they continued to suck any longer, it would hurt their understandings. When they are five or six years old, the male children of any distinction are intrusted to the care of some relation or friend, that their courage may not be weakened by the caresses of their mothers, and a habit of reciprocal tenderness. They do not return to their families till they have attained the age in which the law permits them to marry.

Here we have, indeed, a singular instance of civilization among slaves, upon the most important concern of human life. Which of the polished nations of Europe has carried the care of education so far? Which of us as yet thought of securing his posterity from the effects of parental seduction? The precautions taken at Celebes, which would be useful in all ranks, would be particularly necessary for the children of monarchs.

These are more exposed than others to be tainted with that corruption which surrounds them on all sides; and which at once attacks their head and their heart, through the medium of all their senses. How is it possible that they should be affected with the sight of misery, which they are unacquainted with, and never experience? That they should be lovers of truth, when their ears have been only accustomed to the accents of flattery? Admirers of virtue, while they are bred in the midst of unworthy slaves, who are all eager to extol their propensities and their inclinations? Patient in adversity, which they are not always exempt from? Or, how should they be resolute in dangers to which they are sometimes exposed, when they have been enervated by effeminacy, and continually impressed with ideas of the importance of their existence? How is it possible that they should estimate the services they receive, or know the value of the blood spilt for the preservation of their empire, and to enhance the splendour of their reign, when they have imbibed the fatal prejudice of every thing being their due, and of its being even too



great an honour to die in their cause ? Strangers to every idea of justice, how is it possible that they should not become the scourge of that portion of the human race, whose happiness is committed to their care ?

Fortunately these corrupt tutors are sooner or later punished by the ingratitude of their pupils ; who, themselves being miserable in the midst of their greatness, are all their lifetime tormented with a deep sense of disgust, which cannot be removed from their palaces. Fortunately the sullen silence of their subjects announces to them, from time to time, the hatred they are held in ; and they are too weak to disdain it. Fortunately the religious prejudices that have been instilled into them, rise up and tyrannise their consciences. Fortunately, after a life which no mortal, not even the lowest of their subjects, would accept of, if he were sensible of all the wretchedness of it, they find gloomy perturbation, terror, and despair, attending upon their last moments.

Formerly the people of Celebes acknowledged no other gods but the sun and the moon. They sacrificed to them in the public squares, having no materials which they thought valuable enough to be employed in raising temples. According to the creed of these islanders, the sun and moon were eternal as well as the heavens, the empire of which they divided between them. Ambition set them at variance. The moon, flying from the sun, miscarried, and was delivered of the earth ; she was big with several other worlds, which she will successively bring forth, but without violence, in order to repair the loss of those which the fire of her conqueror will consume.

These absurdities were universally received at Celebes : but they had not so determined an influence over either the nobles or the people as is found in the religious doctrines of other nations. About two centuries ago, some Christians and Mohammedans having brought their opinions here, the principal king of the country took a total dislike to the national worship. Alarmed at the terrible catastrophe with which he was equally threatened by both the new systems of religion, he convened a general assembly. On the day appointed he ascended an eminence ; where, spreading out his hands towards heaven, and in a

standing posture, he addressed the following prayer to the Supreme Being :

“ Great God, I do not, at this time, fall down before thee, because I do not implore thy clemency. I have nothing to ask of thee which thou oughtest not in justice to grant. Two foreign nations, whose mode of worship is widely different, are come to strike terror into my mind, and the minds of my subjects. They assure me, that thou wilt punish me eternally if I do not obey thy laws : I have, therefore, a right to require that thou wouldst make them known to me. I do not ask thee to reveal the impenetrable mysteries which surround thy essence, and which to me are useless. I am come hither to inquire, together with my people, what those duties are which thou intendest to prescribe to us. Speak, O my God ! since thou art the Author of nature, thou canst discern the bottom of our hearts, and knowest that it is impossible they should entertain any thoughts of disobedience. But if thou condescendest not to make thyself understood by mortals ; if it be unworthy of thine essence to employ the language of man to dictate the duties required of man ; I call my whole nation, the sun which enlightens me, the earth that supports me, the waters that encompass my dominions, and thyself to witness, that, in the sincerity of my heart, I seek to know thy will : and I declare to thee this day, that I shall acknowledge, as the depositaries of thy oracles, the ministers of either religion whom thou shalt cause to arrive the first in our harbours. The winds and the waves are the ministers of thy power ; let them be the signals of thy will. If, with these honest intentions, I embrace an error, my conscience will be at ease, and the blame will lie upon thee.”

The assembly broke up, determined to wait the orders of Heaven, and to follow the first missionaries that should arrive at Celebes. The apostles of the Coran were the most active ; and the governor and his people were circumcised : the other parts of the island soon followed their example.

This unfortunate circumstance did not prevent the Portuguese from gaining a footing at Celebes. They maintained their ground there, even after they were driven out

of the Moluccas. The motive which induced them to stay, and which attracted the English to this place, was the facility of procuring spices, which the natives of the country found means to get, notwithstanding the precautions that were taken to keep them at a distance from the places where they grew.

The Dutch, who by this competition were prevented from monopolizing the articles of cloves and nutmegs, attempted in 1660, to put a stop to this trade, which they called contraband. To favour this design, they had recourse to means repugnant to all principles of morality, but which an insatiable avarice has rendered very common in Asia. By persevering in these infamous proceedings, they succeeded so far as to drive out the Portuguese, keep off the English, and take possession of the harbour and fort of Macassar. From that time they were absolute masters of the island without having conquered it. The princes among whom it was divided, re-united in a kind of confederacy. They hold assemblies, from time to time, on affairs that concern the general interest; and the result of their determinations becomes a law to each state. When any contest arises, it is decided by the governor of the Dutch colony, who presides at this diet. He observes these different sovereigns with a watchful eye, and keeps them in perfect equality with each other, to prevent any of them from aggrandizing himself to the prejudice of the company. The Dutch has disarmed them all, under pretence of hindering them from injuring each other, but in reality with a view of depriving them of the power of breaking their chains.

The Chinese, who are the only foreigners permitted to come to Celebes, carry thither tobacco, gold wire, china, and unwrought silks. The Dutch sell opium, spiritous liquors, gum lac, fine and coarse linens. This island furnishes a little gold, great quantities of rice, wax, slaves, and tripam, a species of mushroom, which increases in value in proportion to the roundness of its form, and the blackness of its colour. The customs bring in 88,000 livres [3666l. 13s. 4d.] to the company; but it receives a much larger profit from its trade, and the tenth part of the territory which it holds in full right of sovereignty. These advantages, however, taken together, do not counterba-

lance the expences of the colony, which arise to 165,000 livres [6875l.] more. It would certainly be given up, if it were not with reason looked upon as the key of the spice islands.

THE settlement at Bornea was formed with a less interesting view. It is one of the largest, if not actually the largest island hitherto known. The ancient inhabitants live in the inland parts.

The coasts are peopled with inhabitants from Macassar, with Japanese, Malaysians, and Arabs, who, to the vices that are natural to them, have added a ferocity hardly to be met with elsewhere.

About the year 1526, the Portuguese attempted to settle at Borneo. Too feeble to make their arms respected, they tried to gain the good will of one of the sovereigns of the country, by offering him some pieces of tapestry. This weak prince took the figures wrought in it for enchanted men, who would strangle him in the night-time, if he suffered them to come near his person. The explanations they gave to remove his apprehensions had no effect, he obstinately refused to let the present be brought into his palace, and prohibited the donors from entering his capital.

However, these adventurers afterwards gained admission; but this was an unfortunate privilege to them, for they were all massacred. A factory, which the English established some years after, shared the same fate. The Dutch, who had met with no better treatment, appeared again, in the year 1748, with a squadron, which, though very inconsiderable, so far imposed upon the prince, to whom the pepper entirely belongs, that he determined to grant them the privilege of trading for it exclusively; with this single reserve, that he should be allowed to deliver five hundred thousand pounds of this article to the Chinese, who had always frequented his ports. Since this treaty, the company sends rice, opium, salt, and coarse linens, to Bendermassen: articles, the profits upon which are scarce sufficient to defray the expences of the settlement, although they do not exceed 33,000 livres [1375l.] per annum. The profits arise, however, from the sale of a small

number of diamonds, picked up at great intervals, in the rivers, and from six hundred thousand weight of pepper, which the company purchase at 34 livres [1l. 8s. 4d.] the hundred. Even the agents cannot obtain any thing from Bornea, for their own private traffic except those beautiful canes, the use of which becomes more and more general in our climates. More considerable advantages are derived from Sumatra.

*Settlement of the Dutch at Sumatra.* THIS island extends from north to south eleven degrees. It is divided into two parts, almost equal by the equator, which cuts it obliquely. The heats are moderated by a regular succession of sea

and land breezes, and by very plentiful rains which are frequent in a country covered with forests, and where the thousandth part of the soil is not cleared. Upon this immense space, volcanos are infinitely common; and this is the reason, perhaps, why earthquakes, are more frequent than destructive.

The south part of the island is occupied by the Malaysians, whose ancestors had no more than six leagues of the sea to cross to go into another country. The time of their coming there is not known; neither are we acquainted with the difficulties they had to conquer in forming their settlement. The feudal government, under which they were born, was that which they established. Each captain appropriated to himself a certain district, for which he paid homage to some chief of higher reputation. This kind of subordination has gradually diminished; but there are still some traces of it remaining.

The religion of these people is Mahomedanism, blended with a variety of other fables. Their notions upon the universe are particularly whimsical. They believe that the earth which is perfectly motionless, is supported by an ox, the ox by a stone, the stone by a fish, the fish by water, the water by air, the air by darkness, and darkness by light. This is the end of their system; but the allegory which might be couched under these absurdities is entirely lost.

The Malaysians have few civil laws; and their criminal code is still shorter. Fines, equally divided between the

injured person, or his heirs, and the magistrate, are the only punishment for murder and other crimes. If the delinquency be not proved, they have recourse to those extravagant and capricious kinds of proof, which for a long time have been the opprobrium of Europe.

One of the singularities of their manners is, that they never pay any visit without bringing some present along with them. This consists usually in birds, lemons, or cacao-nuts. No greater rudeness could be offered than to refuse them; but this is a kind of unpoliteness that never occurs.

As these people have few wants arising from social connections, and as their real necessities are easily supplied by nature, they seldom apply themselves to labour, and that with the utmost reluctance. They dwell in huts, raised upon pillars of eight feet high, which are made of bamboo, and covered with palm leaves; and their furniture consists of a few earthen vessels. A piece of cloth, twisted round the loins in form of a girdle, is the common covering of the two sexes.

In the north-west part of the island we meet with another nation, known by the name of Batta. It is a custom with these people to eat criminals convicted of treason or adultery. It is said, that the hope of inspiring horror for these crimes, which were become too common, is the only motive that has given rise to so barbarous a custom.

In the northern part, and there only, the gum benzoin is found, which is chiefly consumed in Persia; and it is there also that we find that precious camphire growing, the use of which is reserved for the Chinese, and especially for the Japanese.

Camphire is a volatile and penetrating oil, or resin, fit for dispelling tumours, and stopping the progress of inflammation; and it is also known for the use that is made of in fire-works.

The tree which furnishes the camphire, is a species of laurel, common in Japan, and in some districts of China. Its trunk rises to the height of the oak. The leaves, alternately disposed upon the boughs, are thin, shining, oval, terminating in a point, and emitting a smell of camphire, when they are bruised. The flowers, collected into clusters, are white; and are each of them composed

of six short petals, in the midst of which is a pistil, surrounded by nine stamens. As the fruit ripens, it becomes a small blackish berry, of the size of a pea, and filled with an oily kernel. All the parts of the plant contain camphire; but the greatest quantity is obtained from the trunk, and especially from the roots. For this purpose, they are cut into slices, and put with water into an iron vessel covered over with its receiver. The heat of a fire, lighted underneath the vessel, makes the camphire rise, which attaches itself to the receiver. It is collected with care, and then sent into Holland, where it is purified by a second distillation, before it is exposed to sale.

The camphire that is brought from Sumatra is by much the most perfect. This is so well known, that the Japanese and Chinese themselves give several quintals of theirs for one pound of this. The botanists are not yet well acquainted with the tree that produces it. All they know is, that it does not grow so high as the former; that its petals are more elongated, its fruit larger, and its leaves, as well as its wood, thicker, and less odoriferous. The assistance of fire is not called in to extract the camphire from it; but, after the trunk has been split into pieces, this substance is separated from it, quite formed, and lodged in the interstices of the fibres, sometimes in clots, and sometimes disposed in flakes, or in the form of berries, which are more esteemed in proportion to their size and purity. Each tree yields about three pounds of a light, friable, and easily soluble camphire, which evaporates in the air, though much more slowly than the camphire of Japan.

The ordinary kind of camphire is seldom given internally, because it excites nausea, and affects the head. That of Sumatra acts very differently; for it strengthens the stomach, removes obstructions, and increases the efficacy of the medicines with which it is combined. Both the sorts of camphire appear to be the produce of the same tree, which is probably a species of the laurel. We are induced to think this, because the genuine cinnamon tree of Ceylon, and the bastard one of Malabar, other species of the same genus, yield by distillation a real camphire, but less perfect, and in smaller quantity.

The lands in the north-east part of the island are almost

always under water; so that there are scarce any inhabitants there; and the few that are found are pirates. They were almost all destroyed in 1760; but a new set of robbers have arisen, as it were, from their ashes, and have begun again to infest the straits of Malacca, and other less celebrated latitudes.

The mountains in the interior parts of the country are full of mines; and the surface of them is stirred up in the dry season. The rains, which last from November to March, and which fall down in torrents, detach the gold, the matrix of which is a very white spar, from the earth, and draw it along into circles made of willow, destined to receive it, and disposed in great numbers; so that the gold which might escape the first, may be retained in some of the succeeding ones. When the sky becomes serene again, each proprietor goes with his slaves to collect the treasures, more or less considerable, which chance has allotted to him. He exchanges them for linens, or other goods, furnished by the English and the Dutch.

These have attempted to work the mines of Sumatra, according to the method generally practised in the old and new hemispheres. Whether from ignorance or dishonesty, the two experiments made for this purpose have failed; and the company has at length been convinced, after having been led into too much expence, that it was not proper for them any longer to pursue so precarious a track of fortune.

Before the arrival of the Europeans in India, the little trade carried on by Sumatra was all concentrated in the port of Achem. There it was that the Arabs and other navigators bought gold, camphire, benzoin, the nests of birds, pepper, and in general every thing these islanders had to sell. The Portuguese, and the nations which raised themselves upon their ruin, also frequented this mart, when it was overturned by some of those revolutions which are too frequent in these countries.

At this period the Hollanders thought of establishing six factories in other parts of the island which enjoyed most tranquillity. The advantages which might have been reaped from these trifling settlements in the beginning, have been almost entirely lost in process of time.

The most useful of them must be that of Palinban,



situated in the eastern part of the island. The company maintains there a fort and garrison of eighty men for sixty-six thousand livres [2750*l.*] Two millions weight of pepper are delivered to them at twenty-three livres ten sols [19*s.* 3*d.*] the hundred; and one million and a half weight of tin at sixty-one livres twelve sols [21*l.* 11*s.* 4*d.*] the hundred. This last article is obtained entirely from the isle of Banca, which is only one mile and a half distant from the continent, and which gives the name to the famous strait through which the vessels going directly from Europe to China generally pass.

Although the Dutch get the commodities they purchase at Palinban at a low price, yet this price yields some profit to the sovereign of the district, who forces his subjects to furnish them to him at a still lower rate. This insignificant despot draws from Batavia part of the food and clothing for the inhabitants of his dominions, and yet the Dutch are obliged to settle their account with him in piastres. From this money, and from the gold taken out of his rivers, he has amassed a treasure which is known to be immense. One single European vessel might possess itself of all these riches; and, if there were any troops on board that it might land, they might maintain themselves in a post which would have been taken without difficulty. It appears very extraordinary that an enterprise so useful and so easy should not have enticed the avarice of some adventurer.

Civilized nations, who, to make themselves masters of the universe, have trampled upon all the rights, and stifled all the dictates of nature, will scarcely shrink at one additional act of injustice or cruelty. There is not a nation in Europe which does not think it has a just right to seize upon the treasures of the East. Setting aside motives of religion, which it is no longer fashionable to plead, since its very ministers have brought it into disrepute, by their unbounded avarice and ambition, how many pretences are still remaining to justify the rage of invasion! People who live under a monarchy are desirous of extending the glory and empire of their master beyond the seas. These happy people are ready to venture their lives in the extreme parts of the globe, to increase the number of fortunate subjects who live under the laws of the best of princes.

A free nation, which is its own master, is born to command the ocean; it cannot secure the dominion of the sea, without seizing upon the land, which belongs to the first possessor; that is, to him who is able to drive out the ancient inhabitants; who are, therefore, to be enslaved by force or fraud, and exterminated in order to get their possessions. The interests of commerce, the national debt, and the majesty of the people, require it. Republicans, who have happily shaken off the yoke of sovereign tyranny, must impose it on others in their turn. If they have broken their chains, it is to forge new ones. They detest monarchy, but they are in want of slaves. They have no lands of their own; they must, therefore, seize upon those of others.

THE trade of the Dutch at Siam was *Trade of the* at first rather considerable. A tyrannic *Dutch at Siam.* prince, who oppressed this unhappy country, having, about the year 1660, shewn a want of respect to the company, it punished him, by abandoning the factories it had established in his dominions, as if it would have been a favour to have continued them. These republicans, who affected an air of grandeur, chose at that time to have their presence looked upon as a favour, a security, and an honour: and they inculcated this singular prejudice with so much success, that, in order to engage them to return, a pompous embassy was sent, asking pardon for what had passed, and giving the strongest assurances of a different conduct for the future.

There was a time, however, when this deference was to cease, and it was hastened by the naval enterprises of other powers. The affairs of the company at Siam have always been in a declining state. Having no fort, it has never been in a condition to maintain the exclusive privilege. The king, notwithstanding the presents he requires, sells merchandize to traders of all nations, and takes goods from them on advantageous terms; with this difference only, that they are obliged to stop at the mouth of the Menan, whereas the Dutch go up the river as far as the capital of the empire, where their agent constantly resides. Their trade derives no great activity from this privilege. They send only one vessel, which transports Javanese

horses, and is freighted with sugar, spices, and linens; for which they receive in return tin, at seventy-seven livres [3l. 4s. 2d.] a hundred weight; gum lac, at fifty-seven livres four sols [2l. 7s. 8d.]; some elephants teeth, at three livres twelve sols [3s. 8d.] a-pound; and from time to time a small quantity of gold dust. One may venture to assert, that their connections here are kept up merely on account of the sappan wood, which is necessary for the stowing of their ships; and for which they give no less than five livres ten sols [4s. 7d.] per hundred weight. Were it not for this want, they would long ago have given up a trade in which the expence exceeds the profits, because the king, who is the only merchant in his dominions, sets a very low price upon the commodities that are imported. A more interelling object turned the ambitious views of the Dutch towards Malacca.

*Situation of the  
Dutch at Ma-  
lacca.*

THESE republicans, who knew the importance of this place, used their utmost efforts to make themselves masters of it. Having failed in two attempts, they had recourse at last, if we may believe a satirical writer, to an expedient which a virtuous people will never employ, but which frequently answers the purpose of a degenerate nation. They endeavoured to bribe the Portuguese governor, whom they knew to be covetous. The bargain was concluded; and he introduced the enemy into the city in 1641. The besiegers hastened to his house, and massacred him to save the payment of the 500,000 livres [20,833l. 6s. 8d.] they had promised him. But truth obliges us to declare, for the honour of the Portuguese, that they did not surrender, till after a most obstinate defence. The commander of the victorious party asked the opposite commander, in a boasting strain, which is not natural to his nation, When he would come back again to the place? "When your crimes are greater than ours," replied the Portuguese gravely.

The conquerors found a strong-built fort; a very healthy climate, though hot and damp: but the trade was entirely decayed; the continual exactions having deterred all nations from resorting there. It has not been revived by the company, either on account of some insuperable difficulties, or the want of moderation, or the fear of in-

juring Batavia. The transactions, at present, are confined to a small quantity of opium and gold, some linens, tin, and ivory.

Their trade would be more considerable, if the princes adhered more faithfully to the exclusive treaty subsisting between them. Unfortunately for their interests, they have formed connections with the English, who furnish them with the commodities they want at a cheaper rate, and give a greater price for their merchandize. Their farms and customs make them some little amends, bringing in 220,000 livres [9,166l. 13s. 4d.] a-year. These revenues, however, and the advantages of commerce, taken together, are not sufficient to maintain the garrison and people employed, which costs the company 44,000 livres [1833l. 6s. 8d.]

This might, for a long time, have appeared to be a small sacrifice. Before the Europeans had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, the Moors, who were the only maritime people in India, sailed from Surat and Bengal to Malacca, where they found traders from the Molucca islands, Japan, and China. When the Portuguese became masters of this place, they did not wait till the merchandize of the East was brought from Asia, but they went to fetch it themselves, and returned by the Sunda islands. When the Dutch had got possession of Malacca and Batavia, they were masters of the two only passages that were then known, and were able to intercept, in time of war, the enemy's vessels. The Straits of Lomboek and Bali have been discovered since, and Malacca then lost the only advantage that gave it importance. Fortunately for the Hollanders at this period, they were subduing Ceylon, which was to supply them with cinnamon, as the Moluccas did with nutmeg and cloves.

• SPILBERG, the first of their admirals *Settlement of the* who displayed his flag on the coast of *Dutch at Ceylon.* this delicious island, found the Portuguese employed in subverting the government and the religion of the country; in exciting the sovereigns among whom it was divided, to destroy each other; and in railing themselves upon the ruins of the states that were thus successively demolished. He offered the court of Candy

the assistance of his country, which was joyfully accepted. "You may assure your masters," said the monarch, "that, if they will build a fort, myself, my wife, and children, will be the foremost in bringing the necessary materials."

The people of Ceylon looked upon the Dutch in no other light than as the enemies of their oppressors, and joined them. By their united forces, the Portuguese were, towards the year 1658, entirely expelled, after a long, bloody, and obstinate war. All their settlements fell into the hands of the company, who still keep possession of them, excepting a small district on the eastern coast, without any port from whence the sovereign of the country had his salt: these settlements formed a regular string, extending from two to twelve leagues into the inland parts of the island.

It is at Mataran only, and that not for any considerable time past, that pepper and coffee are cultivated. The territory of Negombo produces the best cinnamon. Colombo, well known for the goodness of its areca, is the capital of the colony. Had it not been for the expences which the Portuguese had laid out upon this place, the badness of its road would probably have determined the conquerors to fix their administration and forces at the promontory of Galla, where the harbour, though too narrow and difficult of access, is much superior. Still greater conveniencies and more security would be found at Trinquinale: but this excellent and spacious harbour is situated in an ungrateful soil, and at too great a distance from all vendible commodities, to be proper for a staple. The use of the ports of Jaffranapatan, Manar, and Calpentine, is to prevent all commercial intercourse with the people of the neighbouring continent.

By these precautions, the company have appropriated all the productions of the island. The various articles which constitute the several branches of trade, are, 1. Divers precious stones, most of which are of an inferior quality. The Coolies, on the coast of Coromandel, are the persons who buy them up, cut them, and disperse them in the several parts of India.

2. Pepper, which the company buy for eight sols nine deniers [about  $4\frac{1}{2}$ d.] pound; coffee, for which they only pay four sols four deniers [little more than 2d.]; and

cardamom, which has no fixed price. The natives of the country are so indolent, that these productions will never turn to any great advantage.

3. A hundred bales of handkerchiefs, pagnes, and gingham, of a fine red colour, which are fabricated by the Malabars at Jaffranapatan, where they have long been settled.

4. A small quantity of ivory, and about fifty elephants, which are carried to the coast of Coromandel. Thus this gentle and peaceful animal, which is too useful to mankind to be suffered to remain upon an island, is transported to the continent, to aggravate and bear a part in the dangers and horrors of war.

5. Areca, which the company buys at the rate of eleven livres [9s. 2d.] the ammonan, a kind of measure which is supposed to hold twenty thousand arecas, and sells upon the spot at thirty-six or forty livres [from 1l. 10s. to 1l. 13. 4d.]. The areca is a fruit rather common in most parts of Asia, and especially at Ceylon. It grows upon a kind of palm tree, which, like the cocoa tree, has fibrous roots and a cylindrical stem, marked with circular inequalities; large pennatifid leaves, sheathed at their bases, and covered with a kind of net-work, when they are young; clusters of male and female flowers together and enclosed, before they expand, in spatha. It is distinguished by the trunk being equally straight throughout its length: the divisions of its leaves are larger; and those which are placed at the end of the centre costa, are generally shorter than the rest, and denticulated at the point.

The greatest difference lies in the fruit, which is ovoid. Its bark is smooth, and rather thick; the kernel within it is of a whitish colour, of a substance analogous to that of the nutmeg, and of the same size, but harder, and streaked internally. This fruit is much used in Asia. When eaten by itself, as it sometimes is by the Indians, it impoverishes the blood, and dries up the fibres. It is not attended with these inconveniencies, when mixed with betel.

The betel is a plant that creeps or climbs, like the ivy, along-side of trees or props, to which it fixes itself by small roots. From each joint of its samentose stem, a

leaf goes off, shaped almost like a heart, rather long, and narrowed at its extremity, like that of the convolvulus or binweed, usually marked with seven nerves, more or less apparent. The flowers, arranged in a close cluster, push out at the insertion of the leaves, and resemble the flowers of the pear tree, which has a great affinity to this plant. The betel grows in every part of India, but does not come to perfection, except in damp and clayey places. There are private cultivations of it, which turn out to a good account, because of its being in constant use.

At all times of the day, and even in the night, the Indians chew the leaves of the betel, the bitterness of which is corrected by the areca that is wrapped up in them. There is constantly mixed with it the chinam, a kind of burnt lime made of shells. The rich frequently add perfumes, either to gratify their vanity or their sensuality.

It would be thought a breach of politeness among the Indians, to take leave for any length of time, without presenting each other with a purse of betel. It is a pledge of friendship that relieves the pain of absence. It is customary to have the mouth always perfumed with betel, unless one is going to address one's superiors. The women of gallantry are the most lavish in the use of betel, as being a powerful incentive to love. Betel is taken after meals; it is chewed during a visit; it is offered when you meet, and when you separate; in short, nothing is to be done without betel. If it be injurious to the teeth, it assists, and strengthens the stomach. This is, at least, the prejudice generally prevailing throughout India.

6. The pearl fishery, which is also one of the sources of the revenue of Ceylon. It is no improbable conjecture, that this island, which is only fifteen leagues from the continent, was, at some distant period, separated from it by some great convulsion of nature. The tract of sea which at present divides it from the land, is so full of shallows, that no ships can sail upon it; and there are only a few places where small boats may pass in four or five feet water. The Dutch, who assume the sovereignty here, have always two armed sloops, to enforce the payment of the taxes they have imposed. In this straight the pearl fishery is carried on, which was formerly of so much importance; but this source of wealth has been so

much exhausted, that it is but seldom it can be reforted to. The bank, indeed, is visited every year, to see how it is replenished with oysters; but, in general, it is five or six years before a sufficient quantity is to be found. The fishery is then farmed out; and every thing computed, it may produce to the revenues of the company 200,000 livres [8333l. 6s. 8d.] Upon the same coasts, is found a shell-fish called chanque, of which the Indians at Bengal make bracelets. The fishery is free, but the trade is exclusive.

- But the great object of the company is cinnamon, which is the produce of a species of laurel. The root of this tree is fibrous, covered with a very odoriferous bark, from which a real camphire is extracted by distillation. Its trunk, of a moderate height, is divided into several branches; its leaves, almost always opposite and green, are oval, sharp-pointed, and marked with three principal nerves; they are of a dark green, and have the smell of the clove. It is at their axilla, or at the extremity of the branches, that we find clusters of very small white flowers, each composed of six petals, nine stamina, and one pistil, which, as it ripens, becomes a small berry, of the form and consistence of an olive, and filled with a bony kernel. According to some observers, the pistil and the stamina are separate and supported upon two different plants; one male, the leaves of which are sharper; the other female, which has them rounder. The berry, when boiled in water, yields an oil, which swims at the top, and takes fire. If it be suffered to congeal, it acquires a degree of whiteness and consistence; and candles are made of it which have an agreeable smell, and are kept only for the use of the king of Ceylon.

- The wood has no smell: the bark, which consists of three layers, and covers the trunk and the branches, is the only valuable part of the tree. In the months of February and September, that is to say, when the sap is most abundant, the two external layers are removed with great care, so as not to injure that which is close to the wood; in order that the wood may with ease acquire a fresh bark, which is taken off, as the former, at the end of eighteen months. These barks, when stripped of their epidermis,



which is gray and rugged, are cut into slices, and exposed to the sun, and curl up in drying.

The old trees furnish only a coarse and almost insipid kind of cinnamon; but to make them young again, it is sufficient to cut off the trunk. The stock then produces a number of fresh stems, which answer every expectation.

The cinnamon is not reckoned excellent, unless it be fine, smooth, brittle, thin, of a yellow colour inclining to red, fragrant, aromatic, and of a poignant, yet agreeable taste. The connoisseurs give the preference to that, the pieces of which are long but slender. It adds to the delicacies of the table, and is of sovereign use in medicine.

At Ceylon, the art of stripping the cinnamon trees is an employment of itself, and of the meanest kind. For this reason, it is left to the Coolies alone, who form the lowest of the casts. Any other individual who should follow this business, would be ignominiously expelled from his tribe.

The whole island is not covered with cinnamon trees, as it is generally supposed; nor is it possible to strip all those that grow there. The mountains inhabited by the Bedas are full of them; but these singular people do not admit either the Europeans or the Cinglases into their country; and there is no possibility of penetrating into it, without being perpetually engaged in war. The Dutch buy the greatest part of the cinnamon they want from their subjects at Negombo, Columbo, and the promontory of Galla, the only districts under their dominion that supply any. The rest they obtain from the court of Candi, at a higher price. One with another, however, it does not cost them more than thirteen sols two deniers [about 7d.] a pound.

The territorial revenue, the customs, and other branches of trade at Ceylon, do not yield annually more than two millions two hundred thousand livres [91,666l 13s. 4d.]; but the expences of the government, and defence of it, amount to two millions four hundred and twenty thousand livres [100,833l. 6s. 8d.]; this deficiency is supplied from the profits on the cinnamon, which are applied to defray the expences of the wars, that are but too frequent in these parts.

Upon the first commencement of hostilities, most of the inhabitants who dwell upon the coast, and detest the Eu-

ropean yoke, retire into the inland parts of the country. They do not even always wait for this signal, but sometimes take the resolution to withdraw themselves as soon as they perceive the least misunderstanding between their old and new masters. The usurpers, then deprived of the hands that used to supply them with riches, are obliged to penetrate, by force of arms, into a country intersected in all parts by rivers, woods, ravins, and mountains.

The Dutch, who foresaw these calamities, endeavoured, from the time of their first settlement in the country, to seduce the king of Candi, by all the means that are generally most prevailing among the despotic princes of Asia. Every year they sent an ambassador laden with rich presents. They offered their ships to convey his priests to Siam, to be instructed in the religion of that country, which is the same with his own. Although they had subdued the forts and lands which were occupied by the Portuguese, they contented themselves with receiving from this prince the appellation of *guardians of his coasts*. They also made him several other concessions.

These singular instances of management have not, however, been always sufficient to maintain tranquillity, which has several times been interrupted. The war, which ended on the 14th of February 1766, had been the longest and the most active of any that had been occasioned by mistrust, and the clashing of interests. As the company prescribed terms to a monarch who was driven from his capital, and obliged to wander in the woods, they made a very advantageous treaty. Their sovereignty was acknowledged over all the countries they were in possession of before the troubles broke out; and that part of the coasts which remained in the occupation of the natives was ceded to them. They are to be allowed to peel the cinnamon in all the plains, and the court is to sell them the best sort that is produced in the mountainous parts, at the rate of two livres seven sols two deniers [near 2s.] per pound. Their agents are authorised to extend their trade to all parts where they think it can be carried on with advantage. The government engages to have no connection with any other foreign power; and even to deliver up any Europeans who may happen to have insinuated themselves into the island. In return for so many concessions,

the king is to receive annually the value of the produce of the ceded coasts : and from thence his subjects are to be furnished gratis with salt sufficient for their consumption. It should seem that the company may derive great advantages from so favourable an agreement.

The property of the lands in Ceylon belongs to the sovereign more particularly than in any other part of India. This pernicious system has in that island been attended with the fatal consequences that are inseparable from it. The people are in a state of total inactivity. They live in huts, have no furniture, and subsist upon fruits ; and those who are the most affluent, have no other covering than a piece of coarse linen wrapped about their waist. It were to be wished that the Dutch would pursue a scheme, which all the nations who have established colonies in Asia are to blame, never to have attempted, and that is, to distribute the lands among the families, and make them their own property. They would forget, and perhaps hate their former sovereign ; they would attach themselves to agovernment that consulted their happiness ; they would become industrious, and occasion a greater consumption. Under such circumstances, the island of Ceylon would enjoy that opulence which was designed it by nature : it would be secure from revolutions, and be enabled to support the settlements of the neighbouring continent, which it is bound to protect.

*Trade of the Dutch on the coast of Coromandel.*

As soon as the Dutch appeared in India, they were desirous of having factories on the coast of Coromandel and Orixa. With the consent of the sovereigns of the country, they established some at different times on the fishing coast, at Negapatnam, at Sadraspatnam, at Pellicate, and at Bimilipatnam. They obtain annually from these several settlements, for the Asiatic or European markets, four or five thousand bales of linen, which are conveyed to Negapatnam, the principal of all these stations. This staple was entirely open till the year 1690, when a tolerably regular citadel was built there, but of little extent. The houses allowed to be erected there at intervals, have in process of time, rendered the fortifications useless, it was resolved, in 1742, to surround the town

with walls. Its territory, which at first was much confined, was successively enlarged with ten or twelve villages, which were filled with manufactures.

The Dutch, in exchange for the merchandize they receive, give iron, lead, copper, tin, sugar, arrack, wood for the building of houses, pepper, spices, and tutenague, a kind of mineral partaking of the nature of iron and tin. Upon these united articles, they gain one million one hundred thousand livres [45,833l. 6s. 8d.] ; to which may be added, eighty-eight thousand livres [3660l. 13s. 4d.] ; the produce of the customs. The present expences amount to eight hundred and eight thousand livres [33,666l. 13s. 4d.] ; and we may venture to assert, without fear of being accused of exaggeration, that the freighting of the ships absorbs the rests of the profits. The nett produce, therefore, of trade to the company is nothing more than what they get by the sale of their linens.

THEIR situation is still less advanced. *Trade of the Dutch*  
 tenuous at Malabar. The Portuguese, *in the coast of Ma-*  
 driven from all parts, still maintained *labar*  
 their ground in this portion of India,  
 with some degree of consideration, when in the year 1663, they were attacked by the Dutch, who took from them Culan, Cananor, Grandganor, and Cochin. The victorious general had but just invested this last place, the most important of them, when he received intelligence of a peace being concluded between his country and Portugal. This news was kept secret. The operations were carried on with vigour ; and the besieged harrassed by continual assaults, surrendered the eighth day. The next day a frigate arrived from Goa with the articles of peace. The conquerors gave themselves no farther trouble to justify their treachery, than by alleging, that those who complained in so haughty a style, had observed the same conduct at Brazil a few years before.

After this conquest the Dutch thought themselves certain of carrying on a considerable trade in Malabar. The event has not answered the expectations conceived ; for the company have not succeeded according to their hopes of excluding other European nations from this coast. They procure no merchandize there but what they are

furnished with from their other settlements; and being rivalled in their trade, they are obliged to give a higher price here than in the markets, where they enjoy an exclusive privilege.

Their articles of sale consist of a small quantity of alum benzoin, camphire, tutenague, sugar, iron, calin, lead, copper, and quicksilver. The vessel that has carried this trifling cargo returns to Batavia laden with caire, or cocoa-tree bark, for the use of the port. By these articles the company gain at most 396,000 livres [16,500*l.*], which, with 154,000 livres [6416*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] the produce of the customs, make the sum total of 550,000 livres [22,916*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] In time of profound peace, the maintenance of these settlements costs 510,400 livres [21,266*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*]; so that there are no more than 39,600 livres [1650*l.*] remaining to defray the expences of their shipping, for which that sum is certainly not sufficient.

It is true the company gets two millions weight of pepper from Malabar, which is carried in sloops to Ceylon, where it is put aboard several ships fitted out for Europe. It is likewise true, that by virtue of these capitulations, they pay only thirty-eight livres eight sols [1*l.* 12*s.*] for pepper, for which the rival companies pay from forty-three [1*l.* 15*s.* 10*d.*] to forty-eight livres [2*l.*], and private merchants still a great deal more; but whatever advantage they may derive from this article, is more than absorbed by the bloody wars it occasions.

These observations had undoubtedly escaped the notice of Goloness, the director-general of Batavia, when he ventured to affirm, that the settlement of Malabar, which he had long superintended, was one of the most important settlements belonging to the company. "I am so far from being of your opinion," said General Mossel, "that I could wish the sea had swallowed it up a century ago."

*Settlement of the Dutch at the Cape of Good Hope.*

Be this it may, the Dutch, in the height of their success, felt the want of a place where their vessels might put in for refreshments either in going to, or returning from India. They were un-

determined in their choice, when Van-Riebeck the surgeon, in 1650, proposed the Cape of Good Hope, which the Portuguese had imprudently neglected. This judicious man, during a stay of some weeks, was convinced that a colony might be placed to advantage on this southern extremity of Africa, which might serve as a staple for the commerce of Europe and Asia. The care of forming this settlement was committed to him; and his measures were concerted upon a good plan. He made a regulation, that every man who chose to fix there, should have a proper quantity of land allotted him. Corn, cattle, and utensils were to be provided for those who wanted them. Young women, taken from alms-houses, were given them as companions, to alleviate and to share their fatigues. All persons, who, after three years, found the climate did not agree with them, had liberty to return to Europe, and to dispose of their possessions in what manner they chose. Having settled these arrangements, he set sail.

The large tract of country which it was proposed to cultivate, was inhabited by the Hottentots, who are a people divided into several clans, each of which forms a small independent republic; their villages consist of huts covered with skins, which cannot be entered without creeping upon their hands and knees, and are disposed in a circle. These huts are hardly of any other use than to hold a few provisions and household furniture. The Hottentots never enter them but in the rainy season. They are always found lying at their doors; there it is, that, equally regardless of the future and the past, they sleep, smoke, and intoxicate themselves.

The management of cattle is the sole employment of these savages. As there is but one herd in each town, which is common to all the inhabitants, each of them is appointed to guard it in his turn. This post requires constant vigilance, the country being full of wild voracious beasts. The shepherd sends out scouts every day. If a leopard or tyger be seen in the neighbourhood, the whole town takes up arms, and flies to the enemy, who seldom escapes from a multitude of poisoned arrows, or sharp stakes hardened in the fire.

As the Hottentots neither have nor appear to have riches, and that their sheep, which is all their property, are

in common ; there must necessarily be but little cause for disputes among them. Accordingly, they are united to each other by the ties of unalterable friendship : nor would they ever engage in war with their neighbours, if it were not for the quarrels between the shepherds on account of cattle that may have strayed, or been carried off.

Like all people who lead a pastoral life, they are full of benevolence, and partake, in some degree, of the uncleanness and stupidity of the animals they keep. They have instituted a badge of distinction, with which they honour those who have subdued any of the monsters that are destructive to their sheepfolds. The apotheosis of Hercules had no other origin.

It would be a difficult matter to describe the language of these savages with the characters we make use of. It is a kind of warbling, composed of whistlings, and other extraordinary sounds, which have scarcely any affinity to ours.

The fabulous accounts, which say that the women of this nation have a fleshy apron, falling down from the middle of the belly, over the parts of generation, are at length discredited. It has been certified, that these women are formed nearly in the same manner as we see many others in hot climates, where the external organs, both upwards and all around, acquire a larger size, and a more extended shape than in temperate climates. But it is very certain, and has often been observed, that the Hottentot men have but one testicle.

The same views of utility, and the presence of the same dangers, inspire mankind with the same ideas, both in the depth of forests, and in the midst of society. It is not clear even whether this observation ought not to be extended to animals. Birds have a warble that is peculiar to them ; and which is of another kind, when they are to watch over their own preservation, or that of their young. It is a matter we are ignorant of, whether these signals, as temporary as the wants that occasion them, are, or are not, the consequence of reflection. But it is certain that they are in them, as well as in us, the effects of concern, fear, and anger ; and that habit makes them appear such to each other. Thus it is that, in political revolutions, the conspirators have a signal by which they

know each other ; notwithstanding the tumult that prevails, and in the midst of the confusion. It is a cross, a feather, a scarf, or a riband ; it is an exclamation, a word, or the sound of an instrument, which awakens those to whom it is addressed ; while it leaves those, who have not the key of it, involved in sleep and security.

Such was, according to all probability, the first origin of most of the singular customs we find among savages, and even among civilized nations. They were distinguishing characters of the clan to which they belonged, and marks by which they knew each other. The circumcision of the Jews and Mohammedans was perhaps adopted with the same view as flat noses, flattened and oblong heads, hanging and bored ears, or as the figures traced upon the skin, the marks made with burning instruments, the long and short heads of hair, and the mutilation of certain members among other nations. By the amputation of the prepuce, one Jew or Mohammedan discovers itself to another ; and by that of the testicle, one Hottentot certifies to another that he is of the same nation. And why should not these distinctions have been destined to transmit the sentiment either of hatred or friendship, or the conformity of religious worship ; to perpetuate the memory of a benefit or of an injury, or to recommend to one class of men the pursuit of vengeance, or the returns of gratitude towards another class ?

The more the state of man shall be reduced to that of a wandering people, the more will these tokens be useful. Let us suppose two individuals, who shall have had no kind of intercourse with each other in their own country, meeting together in a distant climate. They immediately recognise one another, address each other with mutual confidence, embrace, communicate their reciprocal sufferings, pleasures, or wants, and lend each other assistance. Legislators, anxious of keeping the nations they had civilized separate from the barbarous people that surrounded them, and apprehending that, in process of time, they might still be confounded with the general mass, have placed these signs under the sanction of the gods. The savages have made them as permanent as possible, as much by the degree of consideration they attach to them, as by the violence they have constantly done to nature. Thus



it is that the uncivilized world, having no fixed system of education, association, and morality, have supplied the want of them by universal habits. The disposition of the climate determined the choice of these. The children of nature were subjected, without suspecting it, to a singular kind of authority, which governed without oppressing them; and thus it is that the Hottentots assumed the manners of herdsmen.

But it may be asked, whether these Hottentots are happy? And in return I shall ask, where is the man so prejudiced in favour of the advantages of our social institutions, and so great a stranger to our sufferings, as not sometimes to return in idea into the midst of the forests, or at least to envy the happiness, innocence, and tranquillity of a patriarchal life? This is exactly the life of the Hottentot. Are you fond of liberty? He is free. Are you desirous of health? He knows no other illness but old age. Are you delighted with virtues? He has inclinations which he satisfies without remorse, but is a stranger to vice. I know very well that you will separate yourselves with disgust from a man wrapped up, as it were, in the entrails of animals. Do ye think then, that the corruption in which ye are plunged, your hatred, your perfidy, and your duplicity, are not more disgusting to my reason, than the uncleanness of the Hottentots is disgusting to your senses?

You smile with contempt upon the superstitions of the Hottentots. But do not your priests poison your minds in your infancy with prejudices which torment you during life; which sow divisions in your families, and arm your countries against each other? Your ancestors, have they not destroyed each other several times in defence of incomprehensible questions? These times of frenzy will return, and ye will massacre each other again.

You are proud of your knowledge; but of what use is it to you; or of what service would it be to the Hottentots? Is it then of so much importance to know how to speak of virtue without practising it? What obligation would the savage have to you when you have made him acquainted with arts, without which he is contented; with branches of industry, which can only serve to mul-

tiply his wants and his labours ; or with laws, from which he cannot expect greater security than you yourselves enjoy?

If, however, when you had landed upon these shores, your design had been to lead the Hottentot into a more civilized kind of life, or to infil manners into him which you thought preferable to your own, there would be some excuse for you. But you have made a descent upon his country, merely to deprive him of it. You have come near to his hut with the only view of driving him out of it ; or, if it were in your power, of putting him in the place of the animal who ploughs the ground under the lash of the farmer's whip : your only intention has been to reduce him still nearer to the condition of a brute, and to satisfy your avarice.

Fly, unhappy Hottentots, fly ! and hide yourselves in the depths of your forests ! the wild beasts that inhabit them are less formidable than the monsters under whose empire you are going to fall. The tyger may perhaps tear you in pieces, but he will take nothing but your life away. The others will rob you of your innocence and of your liberty. Or, if you feel yourselves animated with a sufficient share of courage, take up your axes, bend your bows, and send a shower of poisoned darts against these strangers. May there not be one of them remaining to convey to his countrymen the news of their disaster !

But, alas ! you harbour no mistrust, and do not know them ; for mildness appears in their countenances. Their behaviour bespeaks an affability which will impose upon you. How, indeed, should you not be deceived by it, since it is a snare to themselves ? Truth seems to dwell upon their lips. When they address you, they will bend the body, and keep one hand upon their breasts, while they extend the other towards heaven, or offer it to you in token of amity. Their attitude will be that of benevolence : their look that of humanity : but cruelty and treachery reign in the bottom of their hearts. They will overturn your huts ; they will seize upon your cattle ; they will corrupt your wives ; they will seduce your daughters. You must either agree with their extravagant opinions, or they will massacre you without mercy ; for they believe that the man who does not think as they do, is unworthy to live. Make haste, therefore, and lay yourselves in am-

bush for them; and, when they shall bend before you in a suppliant and perfidious manner, pierce them to the heart. You are not to address them with representations of justice, which they will not listen to; but you must speak to them with your arrows; for Riebeck approaches, and now is the time. This man will not, perhaps, do you all the mischief which I announce; but this feigned moderation will not be imitated by his successors. And you, barbarous Europeans, be not incensed at this harangue. It will neither be heard by the Hottentot, nor by the inhabitant of those regions which still remain for you to lay waste. If you should be offended at my words, it is because you are not more humane than your predecessors; it is because you perceive in the hatred I have avowed against them that which I entertain against you.

Riebeck, in conformity to the notions unhappily prevailing among the Europeans, began to take possession of the most commodious part of the territory, and thought afterwards of fixing himself there. This behaviour displeased the natives. "On what pretence," said their envoy to these strangers, "have you sown our lands? Why do you employ them to feed your cattle? How would you behave if you saw your own fields invaded in this manner? You fortify yourselves with no other view than to reduce the Hottentots to slavery." These remonstrances were followed by some hostilities. The Dutch, who were not yet sufficiently powerful, quieted the natives with many promises, and a few presents. All was pacified; and they afterwards enjoyed their usurpation with tranquility.

It has been proved that the company expended, in the course of twenty years, forty-six thousand millions of livres [1,916,666l. 13s. 4d.] in raising the colony to its present state.

It is the finest settlement in the world, if we give credit to the testimony of most seamen, who, after the fatigues of a long voyage, are easily seduced by the convenience they find in this celebrated harbour, where they put in for refreshment. Let us examine whether reflection will confirm these encomiums dictated by enthusiasm.

The Cape of Good Hope, the latitudes of which are so stormy, terminates the most southern point of Africa.

At the distance of sixteen leagues from this famous mountain, there is a peninsula formed on the north side by Table-Bay, and on the south by False-Bay. It is at the first of these bays, which are only separated from each other by an interval of nine thousand toises, that all the ships put in during the greatest part of the year : but from the 20th of May to the 20th of September, the road is so dangerous, and so many misfortunes have happened in it, that the Dutch vessels are forbidden to anchor there. They all go to the other bay, which is entirely free from danger during this season of the year.

The sky of the Cape would be very agreeable, if the winds there were not almost always continual, and commonly violent. The kind of inconvenience arising from this circumstance is removed by the delicious temperature which these winds bring on, in a climate which, considering its latitude, should be intolerably hot. The air of this country is so pure, that it is considered as an almost sovereign remedy against most of the diseases brought from Europe, and not unserviceable against those contracted in India. The inhabitants are subject to few infirmities. It was even a long while before the small pox made its way into this country. This epidemic disease, which is said to have been brought by a Danish vessel, made great ravages at first, which are still renewed at intervals.

The soil in this settlement is not so good as it has been reported to be. The Dutch, on their arrival, found nothing but immense heaths, some shrubs, and a kind of onion, which, when roasted, tastes like a chestnut, and has been called the bread of the Hottentots. Wherever the periodical fall of these plants had not deposited a thick sediment, the earth was no more than a barren sand. All attempts to make it fruitful have not been attended with success, even in the vicinity of the capital, where every encouragement has been given to them. If we except a few valleys, into which the waters have drawn down the little quantity of earth that covered the mountains, the inland parts of the country are not more fertile ; and there is still less water to be found there than on the coasts, where a rivulet or a spring are rarely to be met with. From hence it happens, that although the colony be not numerous, yet the inhabitants are scattered over an extent

of one hundred and fifty leagues along the sea coast, and of near fifty leagues up the country.

The town of the Cape, the only one which is in the colony, consists of about a thousand houses, all built of brick, and thatched, on account of the violence of the winds. The streets are wide, intersecting each other at right angles; and in the principal street there is a canal, with a row of trees planted on each side of it. In a more sequestered part of the town there is another canal: but it has so great a degree of obliquity, that the sluices almost touch each other.

At the extremity of the city is the so much celebrated garden of the company, which is from eight to nine hundred toises in length, and is watered by a stream. To protect the plants in it against the winds, each plot has been surrounded with oaks cut in the form of palisades, except in the centre avenue, where they are allowed to grow to their full height. These trees, though only of a moderate size, form a delightful view in a country where little wood, even underwood, is to be seen, and where the people are obliged to bring all their timber from Batavia. The greatest part of the garden is filled with vegetables. In the small spot dedicated to botanic purposes there are but few plants. The menagerie adjoining to the garden is equally defective: it formerly contained a great number of birds and quadrupeds unknown in our climates.

The country places bordering on the capital are chiefly covered with vines, the produce of which is almost certain in a climate where neither hail nor frost are to be apprehended. It should seem, that, under a serene sky, and in a sandy soil, with the facility of choosing the best aspects, a most exquisite kind of wine ought to be obtained. But whether it be owing to the fault of the climate, or the neglect of the cultivators, the wine here is of a very inferior quality, if we except a dry, sharp, and agreeable, kind of wine, that comes originally from Madeira, and is consumed by the richest of the inhabitants. That sort which is known in Europe by the name of Constantia, and of which there is some white and some red, is only collected from a territory of fifteen acres, and furnished by vines formerly brought from Persia. To increase the quantity, it is mixed with a tolerable good kind of Muscadine wine, that is

produced from neighbouring vineyards. Part of it is given up to the company at a price fixed by themselves; the rest is sold to any person who offers to purchase, at twelve hundred livres [50*l.*] the hogthead.

Corn is cultivated at a greater distance from the Cape. It is always plentiful, and at a moderate price, on account of the facility of preparing the soil, the quantity of manure, and the custom of leaving the land quiet.

At forty or fifty leagues from the harbour no more cultivations to be seen. At a greater distance than this, it would not be possible to convey the provisions with advantage. Here the country is covered only with numerous flocks, which are brought up to the capital of the colony two or three times a-year. They are exchanged for some merchandize, either of primary necessity, or merely articles of luxury brought from Europe and the Indies. The peaceful inhabitants of these sequestered regions are but little acquainted with the use of bread, and generally feed upon fresh or salt meats, together with some vegetables, which are as well flavoured at this extremity of Africa as in our countries. Our fruits, which for the most part have not degenerated, are another resource to them. They derive less advantage from the vegetables of Asia, which do not succeed there; and some of which, even such as sugar and coffee, it has never been possible to naturalize.

When the company formed their settlement at the Cape, they assigned gratuitously to each of the first colonists a portion of land of one league square. These grants, and others which was afterwards made, have since been loaded with a tax at every change of proprietor.

This innovation is not the only thing the colonists had to reproach the mother-country with; they also complain of the low price it fixes upon provisions which it requires for its own use, and of the restraints with which it impedes the sale of those productions which it does not keep. They complain of the fees granted to several officers, upon every commodity sold in the country or exported. They complain of their being prohibited from fitting out the least vessel for the purpose of keeping up a communication among themselves, or of going to fetch from the neighbouring coasts those woods with which nature has not supplied them. They complain of their being

reduced by a number of formalities, as multiplied as they are useless, to the necessity of borrowing the money they want for the increase of their plantations at a most exorbitant interest. They complain, that, being most of them Lutherans, they are not allowed to procure the comforts of religion for themselves at their own expence. In a word, they make a variety of other complaints; which are all upon matters of consequence, and the greatest part of which appear to be well founded.

These grievances ought the more speedily to be redressed the more respectable the colonists are. Their manners are simple, even in the capital. No kind of public diversion is known there; no gaming is practised; visits are but seldom made; and the people talk but little. The women delight only in contributing to the happiness of their husbands, their children, their servants, and even their slaves.

While they devote their time to these tender cares, the husbands are entirely taken up with their business abroad. In the evening, when the high winds have subsided, the whole family together go to take the exercise of a walk, and to breathe the fresh air. The life of one day is that of the whole week; and yet this uniformity is not found to subtract from their happiness.

There is one trait worthy of observation in the manners of this colony, and this is, that the most charming instance of the candour of the primitive ages is revived here. When a young woman forms an attachment, she soon makes a fair avowal of the delightful impression. Love, she says, is a natural passion, which is to make the pleasure of her life, and indemnify her for the dangers of being a mother. The man who has had the happiness to secure her affections is publicly favoured, if his sentiments correspond with those which he has inspired. In these sacred and voluntary ties, which have not been formed by motives of ambition, avarice, or vanity, confidence and tenderness are united; and these two sentiments in simple, calm, and steady minds, produce an union which is very seldom affected by any series of years or of events.

The colony, which has no more than seven hundred regular troops for its defence, computes among its inhabitants fifteen thousand Europeans, Dutch, Germans, and French, the fourth part of which is able to bear arms.

This number would have been increased, if some fatal prejudices of religion had not discouraged a multitude of unfortunate persons, who were disposed to go in search of ease and plenty in these happy climates. It is not to be conceived, that a republic which has admitted, with so much success, all kinds of religious worship into its provinces, should have suffered a company, formed within its own dominions, to convey this odious spirit of intolerance across the seas. If the government ever has the resolution to suppress an abuse so contrary to its own principles, the colony will be peopled in proportion to the means of subsistence it affords; and in that means the yoke of slavery may be abolished without inconvenience, which though it be less oppressive here than anywhere else, is still a degradation of the human species.

The slaves are forty or fifty thousand in number. Some of them have been purchased on the coast of Africa or at Madagascar, others come from the Malays islands. They have the same food as their masters, and are employed in the same labours. Of all the European settlements made in other parts of the world, this is perhaps the only one, where the white men have condescended to share with the negroes, the happy, noble, and virtuous, occupations of peaceful agriculture.

If the Hottentots could have adopted this kind of taste it would have been a very advantageous circumstance to the colony: but the small herds of these Africans that had remained within the boundaries of the Dutch settlements were all destroyed in the year 1713 by an epidemic disease. There were but very few families who escape the dreadful effects of this contagious distemper; and these are of some use for the keeping of the flocks, and for domestic services. The more powerful clans, which dwelt on the borders of the rivers, in the neighbourhood of the forests, or on lands abounding with pasture, having been obliged successively to abandon the tombs and dwellings of their ancestors, have all removed at a distance from the frontiers of their oppressors. The injustice they have experienced has contributed greatly to increase the aversion they had for our labours. These savages find an inexpressible charm in the indolent and independent life they lead in their deserts. Nothing can wean them from



it. One of their children was taken from the cradle, and instructed in our manners and religion: he was sent to India, and usefully employed in trade. Happening, by accident to revisit his country, he went to see his relations in their hut. He was struck with the singularity that appeared there: he clothed himself with a sheep-skin, and went to the fort to carry back his European dress. "I come," said he to the governor, "to renounce for ever the mode of life you have taught me to embrace. I am resolved to follow; till death, the manners and religion of my ancestors. As a token of my affection, I will keep the collar and sword you have given me: all the rest you will permit me to leave behind." He did not wait for an answer, but ran away, and was never heard of after.

Though the character of the Hottentots be not such as the avarice of the Dutch could wish, yet the company derive solid advantages from this colony. Indeed, the tenth part of the corn and wine, together with their customs and other duties, does not bring them in more than three hundred thousand livres [1:500l.] They do not gain more than one hundred thousand [4166l. 13s. 4d.] by their woollen and linen cloths, their hardware, their coals, and other inconsiderable articles they sell there. The expences necessarily attending so large a settlement added to those which corruption has introduced, take up more than all those profits united. Accordingly, its utility arises from another cause.

The Dutch ships that sail to and from India find a safe asylum at the Cape; a delightful, serene, and temperate sky; and learn every thing of importance that happens in both hemispheres. Here they take in butter, cheese, meal, wine, large quantities of pickled vegetables for their Asiatic settlements, and, for some time past, even two or three cargoes of corn for Europe. These conveniences and resources would still be augmented, if the company would at length lay aside those fatal prejudices with which it has always been misled.

Till our days, the productions of the Cape have borne so low a price that the planters were not able to clothe themselves, nor to provide themselves, with any of those necessities which their soil did not supply. This depreciation of the provisions arose from the colonists being for-

bidden to sell them to foreign navigators, whom the convenience of their situation, the necessities of war, or other reasons, might attract to their ports. But a spirit of jealousy in trade, which is one of the greatest evils that can befall mankind, had given rise to this barbarous prohibition. The design of this odious system was to inspire other commercial nations with a disgust for India. There was no relief to be expected, but from government; and the administration, in order not to depart from its plan, always rated them at an excessive price. Even since the experience of a whole century has occasioned these chimerical views to be relinquished, and that the hope of keeping other people away from Asia has been given up, the inhabitants of the Cape have not been allowed a free trade with respect to all their provisions. Tulbagh, indeed, and some other enlightened governors, have given way upon this point, which has contributed to make the circumstances of the people somewhat easier: but it has always been necessary either to bribe the mother-country into a compliance with these permissions, or to keep them a secret. Will, the company, then, never be convinced, that the riches of the colonists will, some time or other, become their own? If they should adopt the ideas I have ventured to suggest to them, they will imitate the spirit of their founders, who did nothing by chance; and who did not wait for the happy events we have been mentioning, to turn their attention towards the finding out of a place fit to serve as the centre of their power. For this purpose, they had cast their eyes upon Java as early as the year 1669.

THIS island, which may be about two hundred leagues in length, and thirty or forty in breadth, appeared to have been conquered by the Malays, at a distant period. A very superstitious species of mohammedism constituted the prevailing worship. Some idolaters were still remaining in the interior parts of the country; and these were the only inhabitants of Java that were not arrived at the last stage of depravity. The island, which was formerly under the dominion of a single monarch, was at that time divided among several fove-

*Dominions of the  
Dutch in the  
island of Java.*

reigns, who were perpetually at war with each other. These eternal dissensions, while they kept up a military spirit among the people, occasioned a total neglect of manners. From their enmity to strangers, and want of confidence among themselves, it was evident, that no nation could have ever been more strongly impressed with the sentiment of hatred. Here men were wolves to each other, and seemed to unite in society, more for the sake of committing mutual injuries, than of affording mutual assistance. A Javanese never accosted his brother, without having a poniard in his hand; ever watchful to prevent, or ready to perpetrate, some act of violence. The nobles had a great number of slaves, either bought, taken in war, or detained for debt, whom they treated with the utmost inhumanity. These slaves were employed in cultivating the lands, and performing all kinds of hard labour; while the Javanese was amusing himself with chewing betel, smoking opium, passing his life with his concubines, fighting, or sleeping. These people possessed a considerable share of understanding, but retained few traces of any principles of morality. They had not so much the character of an unenlightened, as of a degenerated nation: in a word, they were a set of men, who, from a regular form of government had fallen into a kind of anarchy; and gave themselves up, without restraint, to the impetuous emotions which nature excites in those climates.

This depraved character of the inhabitants did not alter the views of the Dutch with respect to Java. Their company might indeed, be thwarted by the English, who were then in possession of a part of the trade of this island. But this obstacle was soon removed. The weakness of James the first, and the corruption of his council, had so damped the spirits of these haughty Britons, that they suffered themselves to be supplanted, without making those efforts that might have been expected from their bravery. The natives of the country, deprived of this support, were forced to submit; but it required time, address, and policy, to complete the conquest of them.

It had been one of the fundamental maxims of the Portuguese, to persuade those princes they wanted to engage or retain in a state of dependence, to send their children to Goa to be educated at the expence of the court of

Lisbon, and initiated early into its manners and principles. But this, which was in itself a good project, was spoiled by the conquerors, who admitted these young people to a participation of the most criminal pleasures, and the most shameful scenes of debauchery. The consequence was, that, when these Indians arrived at the age of maturity, they could not help detesting, or at least despising, such abandoned instructors. The Dutch adopted the same plan, and improved upon it. They endeavoured to convince their pupils of the weakness, inconstancy, and treachery of their subjects; and still more of the power, wisdom, and good faith of the company. ' By this method, they strengthened their usurpations: but we are obliged to acknowledge, that, beside these means, the Dutch had recourse to others which were treacherous and cruel.

The government of the island, which was founded entirely on the feudal laws, seemed calculated to promote discord. Fathers and sons turned their arms against each other. They supported the pretensions of the weak against the powerful, and of the powerful against the weak, as they saw occasion. Sometimes they took the monarch's part, and sometimes that of his vassals. If any person ascended the throne, who was likely to become formidable by his talents, they raised up rivals to oppose him. Those who were not to be seduced by gold or promises, were subdued by fear. Every day was productive of some revolution, which was always begun by the intrigues of the tyrants, and always ended to their advantage. At length, they became masters of the most important posts in the inland parts of the country, and of the forts that were built upon the coasts.

This plan of usurpation was but just ready to be carried into execution, when a governor was appointed at Java, who had a palace and guards, and appeared in great pomp. The company thought proper to depart from the principles of economy they had hitherto adopted, from a persuasion that the Portuguese had derived a great advantage from the brilliant court kept by the viceroy of Goa; that the people of the East were to be dazzled, in order to be the more easily subdued; and that it was necessary to strike the imagination and the

eyes of the Indians, who are guided more by their senses than the inhabitants of our climates.

The Dutch had another reason for assuming an air of dignity. They had been represented in Asia as pirates, without a country, without laws, and without a ruler. To silence these calumnies, they endeavoured to prevail with several states adjoining to Java, to send ambassadors to Prince Maurice of the house of Orange.

The execution of this project procured them a double advantage, as at the same time that it increased their consequence with the eastern nations, it also flattered the ambition of the stadholder, whose protection was necessary to be obtained, for reasons which we are going to explain.

When the company obtained their exclusive privilege, the straits of Magellan, which could have no connection with the East Indies, were improperly enough included in the grant. Isaac Le Maire, one of those rich and enterprising merchants who ought everywhere to be considered as the benefactors of their country, formed the project of penetrating into the South sea by the southern coasts; since he was precluded, by the only track that was known at that time, from going there. In the year 1615, he fitted out two ships, which passed a strait, since called by his name running between Cape Horn and Staten land; and were driven by accident to the coast of Java, where they were condemned, and the crew sent prisoners to Europe.

This tyrannical proceeding gave offence to the people, already prejudiced against an exclusive commerce. It was thought absurd, that instead of giving those who attempted discoveries the encouragement they deserved, a state, purely commercial, should forge shackles to confine their industry. The monopoly, which the avarice of individuals had endured with impatience, became more odious, when the company stretched the concessions that had been made them beyond their due bounds. It was found, that as their pride and influence increased with their power, the interest of the nation would at length be sacrificed to the interest or even the caprice of this formidable body. It is probable that they must have sunk under the public resentment; and that their charter, which was near ex-

piring, would not have been renewed, if they had not been supported by Prince Maurice, favoured by the states-general, and encouraged to brave the storm by the strength they derived from their settlement at Java.

Though the tranquillity of this island may have been disturbed by various commotions, several wars, and some conspiracies, it continues to be as much in subjection to the Dutch as they wish it to be.

Bantam comprehends the western part. One of its sovereigns, having resigned the crown to his son, was restored to the throne in 1680, by the natural restlessness of his temper, the bad conduct of his successor, and a powerful faction. His party was on the point of prevailing, when the young monarch, besieged in his capital by an army of thirty thousand men, without any adherents, except the companions of his debaucheries, implored the protection of the Dutch. They flew to his assistance, beat his enemies, delivered him from his rival, and re-established his authority. Though the expedition was speedy, short, and rapid, and, consequently, could not be expensive, it was contrived to make the charges of the war amount to a prodigious sum. The situation of things would not admit of a scrutiny into the sum demanded for so great a service, and the exhausted state of the finances made it impossible to discharge it. In this dilemma, this weak prince determined to entail slavery on himself and his descendants by granting to his deliverers the exclusive trade of his dominions.

The company maintain this great privilege with three hundred and sixty-eight men, who are stationed in two bad forts, one of which serves as a habitation for the governor, and the other as a palace for the king. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 110,000 livres [4583l. 6s. 8d.] which are regained upon the merchandize sold there. Their clear profits consist of what they gain upon three millions weight of pepper, which they oblige the inhabitants to sell at twenty-eight livres three sols [1l. 3s. 5½d.] a hundred.

These profits are inconsiderable, in comparison of what the company receives from Cheribon, which it subdued without any efforts, without intrigues, and without expence. The Dutch were scarcely at Java, when the sul-

tan of this narrow, but very fertile, state, put himself under their protection, to avoid submitting to a neighbouring prince more powerful than himself. He sells them annually three millions three hundred thousand pounds weight of rice, at twenty-five livres twelve sols [1*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.*] per thousand; sugar, the finest of which costs fifteen livres six sols eight deniers [about 12*s.* 9½*d.*] a hundred; one million two hundred thousand pounds of coffee, at four sols four deniers [about 2½*d.*] a pound; one hundred quintals of pepper, at five sols two deniers [rather more than 2½ a pound; thirty thousand pounds weight of cotton, the finest of which costs only one livre eleven sols four deniers [about 1*s.* 3½*d.*] a pound; and six hundred thousand pounds of areca, at thirteen livres four sols [11*s.*] the hundred. Although the fixing of these prices at so low a rate be a manifest imposition upon the weakness of the inhabitants, the people of Cheribon, who are the most gentle and civilized of any in the island, have never been provoked by this injustice to take up arms. A hundred Europeans are sufficient to hold them in subjection. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 45,100 livres [1879*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*], which are gained upon the linens imported there.

The empire of Mataram, which formerly extended over the whole island, and at present takes up the greatest part of it, was the last that was reduced to subjection. Often vanquished, and sometimes vanquishing, it continued its struggles for independency, when the son and brother of a sovereign who died in 1704, disputed the succession. The nation was divided between the two rivals; and the one who was entitled to the crown by order of succession, had so visibly the advantage, that he must soon have got the supreme power entirely into his hands, if the Dutch had not declared in favour of his rival. The party espoused by these republicans at length prevailed, after a series of contests, more active, frequent, well conducted, and obdurate, than could have been expected. The young prince, whom they wanted to deprive of his succession to the king, his father, displayed so much intrepidity, prudence, and firmness, that he would have triumphed over his enemies, had it not been for the advantage they derived from their magazines, forts, and ships. His

uncle usurped his throne, but shewed himself unworthy to fill it.

When the company restored him to the crown, they dictated laws to him. They chose the place where his court was to be fixed, and secured his attachment, by a citadel, in which a guard was maintained, with no other apparent view than to protect the prince. After all these precautions, they employed every artifice to lull his attention by pleasures, to gratify his avarice by presents, and to flatter his vanity by pompous embassies. From this period, the prince and his successors, who were educated suitably to the part they were to act, were nothing more than the despicable tools of the despotism of the company. All that is necessary for the support of this power, is three hundred horse, and four hundred foot soldiers; whose maintenance, including the pay of the agents, costs them 835,000 livres [34,791l. 13s. 4d.]

The company are amply indemnified for this expence, by the advantages it secures to them. The harbours of this state afford docks for the construction of all the small vessels and sloops employed in the company's service. They are supplied from hence with all the timber that is wanted in their several Indian settlements, and in part of their foreign colonies. Here, too, they load their vessels with the productions which the kingdom is obliged to furnish them; consisting of fifteen millions weight of rice, at seventeen livres twelve sols [14s. 8d.] the thousand; as much salt as they require, at ten livres seven sols ten deniers [about 8s. 8d.] a thousand; a hundred thousand pounds of pepper, at twenty-one livres two sols four deniers [about 17s. 7½d.] a hundred; all the indigo that is collected, at three livres two sols [2s. 8d.] a pound; cadjang, for the use of their ships, at twenty-eight livres three sols two deniers [near 1l. 3s. 6d.] the thousand; cotton yarn, from thirteen sols, to one livre thirteen sols [from about 7½d. to 1s. 5½d.] a pound, according to its quality; and the small quantity of cardamom that is produced there, at a shameful price.

The company, for a long time, disdained to have any connections with Balambuan, situated at the eastern point of the island. There certainly appeared nothing that could lead them to think of reaping any advantage from



this district. But whatever motive the Dutch may have had for it, they have lately attacked this country. After a series of obstinate engagements, and various successes, for the space of two years, the European arms have at length prevailed, in 1768. The Indian prince, conquered and taken prisoner, has ended his days in the castle of Batavia; and his family have been embarked for the Cape of Good Hope, where they will terminate a wretched existence, in Robben, or Penguin island.

We know not what use the conquerors have made of their conquest: neither do we know what advantage they will derive from having dethroned the king of Madura, a fertile island adjoining to Mataram, in order to place his son there as governor. What we are unfortunately well acquainted with is, that, independent of the tyrannic sway of the company, all the people of Java labour under a still more odious kind of oppression from their agents. These greedy and dishonest men, commonly make use of false weights and measures, in order to procure a larger quantity of goods, or provisions, from the people that are to furnish them. This fraud, practised, for their own private advantage, has not hitherto been punished; and there is no reason to hope that it ever will be.

For the rest, the Dutch having abated the turbulence of the Javanese, by gradually undermining the laws that maintained it; and satisfied with having forced them to give some attention to agriculture, and with having secured to themselves a commerce perfectly exclusive, have not attempted to acquire any property in the island. Their territory extends no further than the small kingdom of Jacatra. The ravages committed when this state was conquered, and the tyranny that followed that conquest, had turned it into a desert. It remained uncultivated and inactive.

The Dutch, those of them in particular who go to India to seek their fortunes, were little qualified to recover this excellent soil from its exhausted state. It was several times proposed to have recourse to the Germans; and by the encouragement of some advances, and some gratuities, to exercise their industry in a manner the most advantageous to the company. What these laborious people would have

done in the fields, the silk manufacturers from China, and the linen weavers from Coromandel might have executed in the workshops, for the improvement of manufactures. As these useful projects did not favour any private views, they continued to be nothing more than projects. At length the governors-general Imhoff and Mossel, struck with a scene of such great disorder, endeavoured to find out a remedy.

With this view they sold to the Chinese and the Europeans, at a small price, the lands which the government had acquired by oppressive means. This management has not produced all the good that was expected from it. The new proprietors have devoted most part of their land to the feeding of sheep and cattle, for which they have an easy, free, and advantageous market. Their industry would have been engaged in more important objects, had not the company required, that all the productions should be ceded to them at the same price as in the rest of the island. The mother-country has restrained the cultivations to ten thousand pounds weight of indigo, twenty-five thousand pounds of cotton, one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of pepper, ten millions weight of sugar, and some other trifling articles.

These commodities, as well as all those that are produced in Java, are carried to Batavia, which is built on the ruins of the ancient capital of Jacatra, in the sixth degree of southern latitude.

A city which furnished so considerable a staple, must have received many successive embellishments. Nevertheless, if we except one church recently built, there is no kind of elegance or grandeur in any of the edifices. The public buildings are in general heavy, and have neither beauty nor proportion. If the houses be convenient, and distributed in a manner suitable to the nature of the climate, the fronts of them are too uniform, and built in a bad taste. There is no part of the world where the streets are more wide, or more regularly cut. They afford the foot-passengers, in every part of the town, a clean and firm pavement to walk upon. Most of them are intersected with canals, bordered on each side by stately trees, which spread a delightful shade; and these canals, which are all navigable, convey the provisions and merchandize

to the magazines destined for their reception. Although the heat, which should naturally be excessive at Batavia, be allayed by a very agreeable sea-breeze, which rises every day at ten o'clock, and continues till four; and although the nights be cooled by land-breezes, which die away at day-break; yet the air is extremely unwholesome in this capital of the Dutch East Indies, and becomes daily more so. It is proved by registers of indisputable authority, that from the year 1714 to 1776 fourscore and seven thousand sailors and soldiers have perished in the hospital only. We meet with scarce one among the inhabitants whose countenance bears the mark of perfect health. The features are never animated with lively colours. Beauty, which commands adoration so much in all other parts of the world, is here without motion, and lifeless. Death is talked of with as much indifference as in an army. If it be said that a citizen who is in good health exists no more, no surprise is expressed at so ordinary an event. Avarice says no more than this: *he owed me nothing; or else, I must make his heirs pay me.*

We shall not be surprised at this defect of the climate, if we consider that, for the convenience of navigation, Batavia has been fixed upon the borders of a sea, which is the most salt of any in the world; in the midst of a marshy plain which is frequently overflowed; and along a great number of canals full of stagnated waters, covered with the filth of an immense city, and surrounded by great trees, which impede the free circulation of the air, and prevent the dispersion of the fetid vapours that arise from them.

In order to lessen the danger and loathsomeness of these infectious exhalations, the inhabitants burn incessantly aromatic woods and resins; they intoxicate themselves with scents; and fill their apartments with numberless flowers, most of which are unknown in our climates. Even the bed-chambers are perfumed with the most delicate and purest essences. These precautions are used even in the country places, where all the fields and all the gardens are surrounded with stagnant and unwholesome waters; and yet they are not sufficient to preserve, much less to restore health. Accordingly, rich people have houses built upon very high mountains, which terminate the

plain, where they go several times in the year to breathe the fresh and salutary air. Notwithstanding the volcanos that are seen constantly smoking on the tops of these mountains, and which occasion frequent earthquakes, the sick persons soon recover their strength, but lose it again on their return to Batavia.

Notwithstanding this, the population in this celebrated city is immense. Beside the hundred and fifty thousand slaves, dispersed over an extensive territory, devoted to agriculture, or labouring upon objects of mere ornament, there are several more employed in the town itself, and in domestic services. These were originally dependent men, most of whom have been carried off by force or artifice from the Moluccas, from Celebes, and from other islands. This atrocious act has filled their hearts with sentiments of rage, and they never give up the desire of poisoning or assassinating their barbarous masters.

The free Indians are less exasperated; and are to be found there from all the countries situated to the east of Asia. Each of these people preserve the kind of physiognomy that is peculiar to them; their colour, their dress, their customs, their mode of worship, and their industry: and they have each of them a chief, who is watchful over their interests, and terminates all differences subversive of public tranquillity. To keep such a variety of nations in order, and which are so much in enmity with each other, some abominable laws have been made, which are carried into execution with merciless severity. These laws lose their force only against the Europeans, who are seldom punished, and scarce ever with capital punishments.

Among these several nations, the Chinese deserve our particular attention. For a long time past they had resorted in multitudes to Batavia, where they had amassed immense riches; till, in 1740, being suspected or accused of meditating projects fatal to the government, a horrid massacre was made of them, either with a view of punishing them, or of appropriating their riches. As these Chinese who quit their country are the meanest of all the subjects of that celebrated empire, this unjust and unmerited treatment, has not withdrawn them from a settlement where there are such considerable profits to be made; and it is reckoned that there are about two hundred thousand

of them still remaining in the colony. They follow there, almost exclusively, every branch of industry. They are the only good cultivators, and superintend all the manufactures. Although they are so publicly and so extensively useful, they are still subjected to a heavy poll-tax, and to other tributes still more humiliating. A flag fixed upon an eminence is the signal that gives them notice every month of the obligations they have to fulfil. If they neglect any one of them, a considerable fine is the least of the penalties inflicted upon them.

There may be about ten thousand white men in the city. Four thousand of these, who are born in India, have degenerated to an inconceivable degree. This degradation is chiefly to be attributed to the custom generally received, of leaving the care of their education to slaves.

Notwithstanding the prodigious quantity of insects, more loathsome than dangerous, with which the country is covered, most of these white men lead a delicious life, at least in appearance. Pleasures of all kinds succeed each other, with a degree of rapidity which it is not easy to follow. Beside what can be furnished towards gratifying the delicacy of the palate, from a soil abounding in productions of its own, or which art has naturalized, the tables are also profusely spread with every thing most scarce and exquisite that Europe and Asia can supply. The most costly wines are prodigally lavished. Even the waters of the island, which are reckoned, not without reason, unwholesome and disagreeable, are replaced by the Seltzer waters, brought at a considerable expence from the farthest part of Germany.

A spirit of dissipation, so universally prevailing among a people, who, in other parts of the world, are found so frugal and laborious, seems to announce a boundless degree of corruption; yet there is scarce more freedom of manners at Batavia than in the other establishments formed by the Europeans in the East Indies. Perhaps even the ties of marriage are held in greater respect here than elsewhere. None but unmarried men allow themselves to keep concubines, who are most frequently slaves. The priests have endeavoured to stop the progress of these connections, which are always secret, by refusing to baptize the chil-

dren that spring from them ; but they are become less rigid, since a carpenter belonging to the company, who chose his son should be of some religion or other, took the resolution to have him circumcised.

Luxury has maintained its ground still more successfully than concubinage. The ladies, who are universally ambitious of distinguishing themselves by the richness of their dress, and the magnificence of their equipage, have carried this taste for parade to excess. They never appear in public without a numerous train of slaves ; and are either drawn in magnificent cars, or are carried in superb palanquins. In 1758, the company attempted to restrain their passion for jewels. These regulations were received with contempt. It would, indeed, have been an extraordinary singularity, if the use of jewels had been discontinued in the country where they are produced ; and if the merchants had succeeded in regulating at the Indies a species of luxury which they bring from thence, with a view of lessening or increasing it in this part of the world.

It is in vain that the force and example of an European government are made to contend with the laws and manners of the climate of Asia.

We find, however, some traces of the character of the Dutch in the country places. It is impossible to see any thing more agreeable than the environs of Batavia. They are covered with neat and agreeable villas ; with kitchen gardens filled with vegetables, much superior to those of our climates ; with orchards, the various fruits of which have an exquisite flavour ; with groves that yield an agreeable shade ; and with gardens finely ornamented, and even with taste. It is the fashion to reside there constantly ; and the people in office scarce ever go the city, unless to transact public business.

The roads leading to these delightful retreats are wide, smooth, easy, and bordered with trees, planted in a straight line, and cut with regularity.

Batavia is situated at the bottom of a deep bay, containing several islands of a middling size, which break the impetuosity of the sea. It is, properly speaking, a road ; but is as safe a retreat from all winds, and in all seasons, as the best harbour. The ships which come in and go out

from hence receive part of their cargoes, and get the necessary repairs at the small island of Ornuft, which is only at two leagues distance, and where docks and magazines are formed. Sixty years ago these vessels came up the river, which empties itself into the sea, after having fertilized the lands and refreshed the city. It is no longer accessible to any thing but boats, since a bank of mud has been formed at its mouth, which becomes every day more difficult to be got over. This is said to be the consequence of the practice adopted by all rich men, of turning the current of the river, in order that they may surround their country houses with water. Whatever may be the cause of this misfortune, it is necessary to employ the most effectual means to remedy it. The importance of Batavia renders it well worth while to pay a serious attention to every thing that may contribute to the improvement and utility of its road, for it is the most considerable place in India.

All the vessels sent out by the company from Europe to Asia touch at Batavia, except those which go directly to Ceylon, to Bengal, and to China. They are laden in return with the productions and merchandize supplied by Java, and with all those that have been brought there from the different factories and markets scattered throughout these rich coasts, or over these immense seas. The Dutch settlements in the East are places which, on account of their situation, their provisions, and their wants, keep up the most brisk and constant intercourse with Batavia. Beside the ships sent by government, there are many private vessels that arrive there. But these must be furnished with passports. Any of them that should neglect this precaution, which was contrived to prevent fraudulent trade, would be seized by the sloop that are continually cruising in these latitudes. When they arrive at the place of their destination, they deliver to the company those articles of lading which it has reserved the exclusive trade of to itself, and dispose of the rest to whom they choose. The slave trade constitutes one of the principal branches of the free commerce; it consists annually of six thousand of both sexes. It is from this base and wretched set of women that the Chinese choose their wives, whom they are

not permitted to bring along with them, nor to send for from their country.

To these articles of importation may be added those brought by a dozen of Chinese junks from Emoy, Limpo, and Canton; with about two thousand Chinese on board, who come every year to Java, in hopes of acquiring riches. The tea, the china, the raw silks, and the silk stuffs and cottons they bring there, may amount to three millions of livres [125,000*l.*] Tin and pepper are given them in exchange, but clandestinely, because private persons are prohibited from trading in these articles. They also receive tripam, gathered on the borders of the sea at the Moluccas; as likewise sharks' fins and stags' piz-zles: the virtues of which, whether real or imaginary, are unknown in our countries. Another article they get in exchange is those birds' nests so much celebrated all over the east, which are found in several places, and chiefly on the coasts of Cochin-China. These nests are of an oval shape, an inch high, three inches round, and weigh half an ounce. They are formed by a species of the swallow; its head, breast, and wings, are of a fine blue, and its body milk white. These birds make their nests of the spawn of fish, or of a glutinous froth which the agitation of the sea leaves upon the rocks, to which they are fastened at the bottom and on the side. The taste of them is naturally insipid; but as they are thought to increase the passion for women, which prevails universally in these regions, art has endeavoured, and perhaps with success, to render them agreeable to the palate by varieties of seasoning.

Beside these productions, the Chinese at Batavia receive also some ready money. This sum is always increased by the remittances which their fellow-citizens settled at Java send to the families they have a regard for, and by the wealth, still more considerable, which sooner or later is amassed by those, who, satisfied with the fortune they have made, return to their own country, of which they seldom lose sight.

The Spaniards from the Philippine islands also frequent Batavia. Formerly they bought linens there. They take nothing at present from thence but cinnamon for their home consumption, and for the purpose of supply-



ing part of Mexico. They pay for this important article with gold, which is one of the productions of these same islands, and with the cochineal and pialtres brought from Acapulco.

The French seldom go to Batavia in peace time, although the want of subsistence has often induced them to go there in the course of the two last wars. They will be seen there less frequently, when the isle of France and Madagascar shall have been put into a condition to supply their fleets and armies.

Some of the English vessels, which go directly from Europe to China, cast anchor in this road, in order to sell hardware, arms, wines, oils, and other less important articles, which all of them belong to the ships crews. Formerly, the English, who are employed in trading from one part of India to another, were also sometimes seen to arrive there. The number of these is increased since their equipments have been multiplied; and their trade is become more considerable. The articles they sell are trifling, but the purchases they make are considerable. Their lading consists chiefly of large quantities of arrack, an exquisite kind of liquor, made with rice, molasses, and cocoa tree wine, which, after being fermented together, are distilled.

All the provisions, and all the merchandize that come into, or go out of, Batavia, pay five per cent; and these customs are farmed at one million nine hundred thousand eight hundred livres [79,200l.] This sum would be more considerable, if the articles which belong to the company, or which are designed for them, were subject to the taxes; if the chief agents of this powerful body did not most commonly elude the payments; and if frauds were less frequent among all ranks of people. There is one branch of the revenue which cannot but astonish us; it is that arising from games of chance. The Chinese pay annually three hundred and eighty-four thousand livres [16,000l.] for the privilege of opening them to the public. Multitudes of persons resort to them from all quarters, with that degree of eagerness so ordinary in burning climates, where the passions know no restraint. There it is that the greatest part of men, at their own disposal, go to buy their fortunes, and that all slaves go to squander what

they have been able to purloin from the vigilance of their masters. There are still other taxes in this capital of the Dutch East Indies, but yet they are not sufficient to cover the expences of this staple, which amount almost regularly to six millions six hundred thousand livres [275,000l.]

THE council which presides over all the settlements formed by the company, is resident at Batavia. It is composed of the governor of the Dutch Indies, of a director-general, or five judges, and of a small number of assistants, who have no votes, and only supply the place of the deceased judges till their successors are appointed.

*The manner of conducting the affairs of the Dutch company in India and in Europe.*

The power of nomination to these offices is vested in the direction at home. They are open to all who have money, and to all who are related to, or protected by, the governor-general. Upon his death, the director and the judges provisionally appoint a successor, who seldom fails to be confirmed in his appointment. If he were not, he would no more be admitted into the council, but would enjoy all the honours attached to the post he had filled during a temporary vacancy.

The governor-general reports to the council the state of affairs in the island of Java; and each judge that of the province intrusted to his care. The director has the inspection of the chest and magazines at Batavia, which supply the rest of the settlements. All purchases and sales are directed by him. His signature is indispensably necessary in all commercial transactions.

Though all points ought to be decided in the council by a majority of votes, yet the will of the governor-general is seldom contradicted. This influence is owing to the deference paid him by those members who are indebted to him for their elevation, and to the necessity the others are under of courting his favour, in order that they may make their fortunes more rapidly. If on any occasion he should meet with an opposition too repugnant to his views, he would be at liberty to pursue his own measures, by taking the responsibility of them upon himself.

The governor-general, like all the rest of the officers, is appointed only for five years, but usually holds his place during life. There have formerly been instances of governors-general who have retired from business, to pass their days in tranquillity at Batavia; but the ill treatment experienced from their successors, has, of late years, determined them to remain in their post till death. For a long time they appeared in great state, but this parade was laid aside by the governor-general Imhoff, as useless and troublesome. Though all orders of men may aspire to this dignity, none of the army, and but few of the gown, have been known to obtain it. It is almost always filled by merchants, because the spirit of the company is entirely commercial. Those who are born in India have seldom sufficient address or abilities to procure it. The present president, however, has never been in Europe.

The appointments of this principal officer are but trifling; he has no more than two thousand two hundred livres [91l. 13s. 4d.] a month, and subsistence equal to his pay. The greatest part of his income arises from the liberty allowed him, of taking as much as he thinks proper from the magazines at the current price, and from that he assumes the liberty of trading to any extent he judges convenient. The income of the judges is likewise very considerable, though the company allows them only four hundred and forty livres [18l. 6s. 8d.] a month, and goods to the same amount.

The council meets but twice a-week, unless when some extraordinary events require a more strict attendance. They appoint to all civil and military employments in India, except those of the writer and serjeant, which they thought might be left, without inconvenience, at the disposal of the governors of the respective settlements. On his advancement to any post, every man is obliged to take an oath that he has neither promised, nor given any thing to obtain his employment. This custom, which is very ancient, familiarizes people with false oaths, and proves no bar to corruption. Whoever considers the number of absurd and ridiculous oaths necessary to be taken at present in most countries, on being admitted into any society or profession whatever, will be less surprised to find prevarication still prevailing, where perjury has led the way.

While good faith reigned upon the earth, a simple promise was sufficient to ensure confidence. Oaths owe their origin to perfidy. Man was not required to call upon the God that heard him to witness his veracity, till he deserved no longer to be believed. Magistrates and sovereigns to what do your regulations tend? You either oblige the man of probity to lift up his hand and call Heaven to witness, which with him is a requisition as injurious as it is useless; or you compel an oath from the mouth of a reprobate. Of what value can the oath of such a man appear to you? If the oath be contrary to his own security, it is absurd; if it be consonant to his interest, it is superfluous. Does it argue a knowledge of the human heart to give the debtor his choice between his ruin and a falsehood, or the criminal his option between death and perjury? The man whom motives of revenge, interest, or wickedness, have determined to give a false testimony, will he be deterred by the fear of committing one crime more? Is he not apprised, before he is brought up to the tribunal of justice, that this formality will be required of him? And has he not from the bottom of his heart despised it before he complied with it? Is it not a species of impiety to introduce the name of God in our wretched disputes? Is it not a singular mode of making Heaven, as it were, an accomplice in the guilt, to suffer that Heaven to be called upon, which has never contradicted, nor will ever contradict, the oath? How intrepid, therefore, must not the false witness become, when he has with impunity called down the divine vengeance upon his head without the fear of being convicted? Oaths seem to be so much debased and prostituted by their frequency, that false witnesses are grown as frequent as robbers.

All connections of commerce, not excepting those with the Cape of Good Hope, are made by the council, and the result of them always falls under their cognisance. Even the ships that sail directly from Bengal and Ceylon, only carry to Europe the invoices of their cargoes. Their accounts, as well as all others, are sent to Batavia, where a general register is kept of all affairs.

The council of India is not a separate body, nor is it independent. It acts in subordination to the direction established in the United Provinces. Though this be, in

the strictest sense of the word, a direction, the care of disposing of the merchandize twice a-year is divided between six chambers concerned in this commerce. Their business is more or less, according to the funds that belong to them.

The general assembly, which has the conduct of the business of the company, is composed of the directors of all the chambers. Amsterdam nominates eight, Zealand four, each of the other chambers one, and the state but one. Hence we see that Amsterdam, having half the number of voices, has only one to gain to enable it to turn the scale in all the deliberations, where every question is decided by a majority of votes.

This body, which is composed of seventeen persons, meets twice or thrice a-year, during six years at Amsterdam, and two at Middleburg. The other chambers are too inconsiderable to enjoy this prerogative. Some mysterious minded men, towards the middle of the last century, imagined that profound secrecy might insure greater success to their transactions; and four or five of the most enlightened or most powerful men among the deputies were accordingly chosen, and invested with authority to regulate all affairs of importance without the consent of their colleagues, and without being obliged even to ask their opinion.

Notwithstanding the faults which it is easy to perceive in these singular institutions, the company rose to a very brilliant state of prosperity. Let us endeavour to investigate the causes of this political phenomenon.

*Causes of the prosperity of the company.* THE early successes of the company were owing to their having the good fortune, in less than half a century, to take more than three hundred Portuguese vessels;

some of which were bound for Europe, and others for the different sea-ports in India, and were laden with the spoils of Asia. This wealth, which the captors had the honesty to leave untouched, brought to the company immense returns, or served to procure them. Thus the sales became very considerable, although the exports were very moderate.

The decline of the maritime power of the Portuguese

encouraged the Dutch to attack the settlements belonging to that nation, and greatly facilitated the conquest of them. They found the forts strongly built, defended by a numerous artillery, and provided with every thing that government and the rich individuals of a victorious nation might naturally be supposed to have collected together for their protection. To form a just idea of this advantage, we need only consider what it has cost other nations to obtain permission to fix in an advantageous situation, to build houses, magazines, and forts, and to procure all the conveniencies necessary for their security or their commerce.

When the company found themselves in possession of so many rich and well established settlements, they did not suffer themselves to be seduced by a grasping spirit of ambition. They were desirous of extending their commerce, not their conquests; and can scarce be accused of any act of injustice, except such as seemed necessary to secure their power. The East was no longer a scene of bloodshed, as it had been at the time when the desire of distinguishing themselves by martial exploits, and the rage of making proselytes, gave the Portuguese a menacing air wherever they appeared in India.

The Dutch seemed to have arrived rather to revenge and rescue the natives of the country than to enslave them. They maintained no wars with them, but such as were necessary to procure settlements upon their coasts, and to oblige them to enter into treaties of commerce. It is true, these people received no advantage from them, and were deprived of a great part of their liberty; but in other respects, their new masters, rather less barbarous than the conquerors they had dispossessed, left the Indians at liberty to govern themselves, and did not compel them to change their laws, their manners, or their religion.

By their manner of posting and distributing their forces, they contrived to keep the people in awe, whom they had at first conciliated by their behaviour. If we except Cochin and Malacca, they had nothing upon the continent but factories and small forts. The islands of Java and Ceylon contained their troops and magazines; and from thence their ships maintained their authority, and protected their trade throughout India.

This commerce was become very considerable since the destruction of the Portuguese power had thrown their spice trade into their hands. Although the chief consumption of the spices was in Europe, the fortunate possessors of this branch of commerce did not fail to sell a considerable part of them in the Indies, though at a lower price. They found an annual vent there for ten thousand pounds weight of mace, one hundred thousand pounds of nutmegs, one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of cloves, two hundred thousand pounds of cinnamon, and three or four millions weight of pepper. These, however, were in general spices of an inferior quality, which would not have been sold in our countries.

The care of exporting and distributing the spices assisted the Dutch in appropriating to themselves several other branches of commerce. In process of time they became masters of the coasting trade of Asia, as they were already of that of Europe. This navigation employed a great number of ships and sailors, who, without causing any expence to the company, contributed to its security.

By virtue of these superior advantages, they were enabled for a long time to prevent the attempts of other nations to interfere in the Indian trade, or to make them abortive. The produce of this rich country came to the Europeans through the hands of the Dutch, who never experienced those restraints from their country which have in later times been imposed everywhere else. The government, convinced that the proceedings of other nations neither ought nor could be a rule to direct their conduct, always gave the company leave to dispose of their merchandize at the capital freely, and without reserve. At the time this society was instituted, the United Provinces had neither any manufactures nor crude materials to work upon. It was, therefore, no inconvenience, but rather a point of great policy, to allow, and even encourage, the citizens to wear linens and stuffs imported from India. The various manufactures which were introduced into the republic, in consequence of the repeal of the edict of Nantz, might have induced them to lay aside the thoughts of purchasing their clothing from so remote a country; but the fondness that prevailed in Europe at that time for French fashions, had given so advantageous an opening for

the manufactures of the refugees, that they had not the least idea of departing from the ancient channel. Since the high price of labour, the necessary consequence of a redundancy of money, has lessened the manufactures, and obliged the nation to trade upon a frugal plan, Indian stuffs have had a greater run than ever. It was thought that fewer inconveniences would arise from enriching the Indians than the English or French, whose prosperity would not fail to hasten the ruin of a state, the opulence of which is only supported by the blindness, the disputes, or the indolence, of other powers.

THIS disposition of things had carried the fortune of the company to a *Decline of the* degree from which it has at length fallen off. This truth will be made apparent by entering into a detail of some facts.

The first funds of this commercial association did not amount to more than 14,211,648 livres [592,152l.] Of this fund, 8,084,813 [336,867l. 4s. 2d.] were furnished by Amsterdam, 2,934,540 livres eight sols [122,272l. 10s. 4d.] by Zealand, 1,180,905 livres [49,204l. 7s. 6d.] byENCHUYSEN, 1,034,000 [43,083l. 6s. 8d.] by Delft, 587,109 livres twelve sols [24,462l. 18s.] by Horn, and the remaining 390,280 livres [16,261l. 13s. 4d.] by Rotterdam.

This capital, which has never been increased, and which, since its establishment to the first of January 1778, has yielded, one year with another, twenty-one and one-seventeenth per cent. was divided into sums of 6600 livres [275l.] which were called shares. Their number amounted to two thousand one hundred and fifty-three. They were sold for ready money, or upon credit, as all merchandize is. The form required in transacting this business was only to substitute the name of the buyer, instead of that of the seller, upon the books of the company; and in this consisted the sole claim the proprietors had. Avarice and the spirit of calculation have suggested another mode of being concerned in this traffic. Persons who had no shares to sell, and others who had no intention to buy, engaged themselves reciprocally; the former to furnish a cer-



tain number of shares, and the latter to take them at a stated price, and on a given day. The price they bore at that period determined the fate of these gamblers. The person who had lost paid the difference in money, and thus ended the negotiation.

The desire of gain, and the fear of losing in these bold speculations, generally excited an extraordinary degree of agitation in the minds of the persons concerned. Good or bad news was invented; the credit of this intelligence was alternately lessened or confirmed; and attempts were made to discover the mysteries of courts, and to bribe ministers. Public tranquillity was so frequently disturbed by the collision of these opposite interests, that the government thought it necessary to take some steps to prevent the excess of this stock-jobbing. It was declared, that every sale of shares should be deemed void, unless it could be proved by the books, that the seller, at the time of making the bargain, was really possessed of that property. Men of honour did not think themselves dispensed from their engagements by this law; but it produced the intended effect of making these transactions less frequent.

In successful times, these shares rose to an almost incredible price, as far as to eight times their original value; but they have successively fallen off. At the period we are now writing, they do not gain more than about three hundred and sixty per cent. This is even a higher price than they will sell for anywhere, except in Holland, where the people have used themselves to be satisfied with an interest of two and three-fourths per cent.

At the end of the year 1751, the capital of the company, after the payment of the debts, did not exceed 62,480,000 livres [2,603,333l. 6s. 8d.] Of this sum, even, there was not, in money, good bills, and merchandize, both in the magazines, or upon the seas of Europe and India, any more than 38,060,000 livres [1,585,833l. 6s. 8d.] The remainder consisted of doubtful or desperate debts, of arms, provisions, artillery, military stores, cattle, slaves, and some other effects, which were not objects of commerce.

At the same period, the annual profits arose to 27,940,000 livres [1,164,166l. 13s. 4d.] But, in order

to gain this return; it was necessary to lay out 20,460,000 [852,000*l.*] so that the nett profit was 7,480,000 livres [311,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] to answer the dividend, and to supply the expences of war, or the losses from fire, shipwreck, and the other various calamities which human prudence can neither foresee nor prevent.

This situation appeared so very alarming to Moffel, the ablest of the chiefs that ever governed the Dutch settlements in the East Indies, that he considered the company as an exhausted body, to be supported only by cordials: it was, as he expressed himself, a leaky vessel, that is kept from foundering only by the pump.

Notwithstanding all the endeavours we have made, it has been impossible to obtain a state of accounts posterior to the one we have just given. What are then the people interested in these concerns to think of the obstinacy with which they are left in ignorance of their situation? They must conclude, either that their affairs are in the utmost confusion; that the persons to whom they have intrusted the administration of them, are dishonest men, whose constant design is to order and dispose of every thing at pleasure, and to pillage, without subjecting themselves to any kind of reclamation; or who create suspicions of malversation, merely for the purpose of securing themselves from the imputation of ignorance. They must naturally say to themselves, we are in the hands of unskilful men, or of knaves; and of these two suppositions, whichever they may adopt, the effect will be the same. The stockholders will be mistrustful, the shares will be depreciated, and the company will fall to ruin. When we consider, with a little attention, this mysterious kind of conduct, we shall find it difficult to determine upon which we are most to lay the blame, upon the indolence of the proprietors, who have a right to demand an account from persons, who, in fact, are no more than their agents, and who certainly will not be involved in their ruin; or upon the tyrannical insolence of these representatives, to whom their fellow-citizens have intrusted their fortune, which they make use of, as if it were their own; or, lastly, upon the perfidious connivance of the rulers of the state, who dare not, or can not, or will not, interpose their authority in a

matter of so great importance. However this may be, the secrecy to which the company binds its agents by oath, does not prevent it from being apparent, that its situation is becoming every day more deplorable. The company has itself been obliged to communicate its distresses to other nations, by continuing constantly to diminish its dividends. Let us now endeavour to investigate the true causes of this melancholy truth.

*Reasons of the  
decline of the  
company.*

THE first of these was the multitude of little wars they were successively engaged in, without intermission. Scarce had the inhabitants of the Moluccas recovered from the astonishment into which they had been thrown by the victories gained by the Dutch over a people whom they looked upon as invincible, than they grew impatient of the yoke. The company, dreading the consequences of this discontent, attacked the king of Ternate, to oblige him to consent to the extirpation of the clove-tree everywhere, except in Amboyna. The islanders in Banda were utterly exterminated, because they refused to become slaves. Macassar, desirous of supporting their pretensions, kept a considerable force at bay for a long time. The loss of Formosa brought on the ruin of the factories of Tonkin and Siam. The company were obliged to have recourse to arms, to support the exclusive trade of Sumatra. Malacca was besieged, its territory ravaged, and its navigation interrupted by pirates. Negapatan was twice attacked; Cochin was employed in resisting the attempts of the kings of Calicut and Travancor. Ceylon has been a scene of perpetual disturbances, which are as frequent, and still more violent, at Java, where peace can never continue long, unless the company will give a reasonable price for the commodities they require. All these wars have proved ruinous, more ruinous, indeed, than they ought to have been, because those who had the management of them only sought opportunities of enriching themselves.

These notorious dissensions have, in many places, been followed by odious oppressions, which have been practised at Japan, China, Cambodia, Aracan, on the banks of the Ganges, at Achem, Coromandel, Surat; in Persia,

at Baffora, Mocho, and other places. Most of the countries in India are filled with tyrants, who prefer piracy to commerce, and who acknowledge no right but that of force, and think that whatever is practicable is just.

The profits accruing to the company from the places where their trade met with no interruption for a long time, counterbalanced the losses they sustained in others by tyranny or anarchy; but other European nations deprived them of this indemnification. This competition obliged them to buy dearer, and to sell cheaper. Their natural advantages might, perhaps, have enabled them to support this misfortune, if their rivals had not determined to throw the trade carried on from India to India into the hands of private merchants. By this expression, we are to understand the operations necessary to transport the merchandize of one country in Asia to another; from China, Bengal, and Surat, for instance, to the Philippines, Persia, and Arabia. It was by means of this circulation, and by a multiplicity of exchanges, that the Dutch obtained for nothing, or for a trifle, the rich cargoes they brought to Europe. The activity, economy, and skill of the free merchants, drove the company from all the sea-ports where no partiality was shown.

This revolution, which so clearly pointed out to them what steps they had to take, did not even set them right with respect to a measure that was destructive to trade. They had been accustomed to carry all their Indian and European merchandize to Batavia, from whence it was distributed among the different factories where it might be sold to advantage. This custom occasioned expence and loss of time, the inconveniencies of which were not perceived while their profits were so enormous. When other nations carried on a direct trade, it became indispensably necessary to relinquish a system, not only bad in itself, but incompatible with circumstances. The dominion of custom, however, still prevails; and it was said to be owing to the company's apprehensions that their servants would make an improper use of any innovation, that they did not adopt a measure, the necessity of which was so fully demonstrated.

This was probably nothing more than a pretext which served to conceal motives of private interest. The fraud

of the agents were more than winked at. The first of them employed had, for the most part, been exact in their conduct. They had been under the direction of admirals, who visited all the factories who were invested with absolute powers in India, and, at the conclusion of every voyage, gave an account in Europe of their administration. In proportion as the government became a sedentary one, the agents, who were not so strictly watched, grew more remiss. They abandoned themselves to that effeminacy, a habit of which is so easily contracted in hot countries. It became necessary to increase the number of these agents, and no one made a capital point of correcting an abuse, which gave the people in power an opportunity of providing for all their dependents; who went to Asia with a view of making a considerable fortune in a short time. Being prohibited from trading, their appointments not being sufficient to maintain them, and all honest ways of enriching themselves being shut against them, they had recourse to mal-practices. The company were cheated in all their affairs by factors who had no interest in their prosperity. These disorders grew to such a height, that it was proposed to allow a premium of five per cent. upon all commodities sold or bought, which was to be divided among all the servants of the company according to their ranks. Upon these terms they were obliged to take an oath that their account was just. This arrangement lasted but five years; it being found that corruption prevailed as much as ever; the premium and the oath were then abolished; and from this period the agents demand any consideration for their trouble that their avarice dictates.

The contagion, which at first infected the lower factories, gradually reached the principal settlements, and at last Batavia itself. - So great a simplicity of manners prevailed there at first, that the members of the government usually dressed like common sailors, and never wore decent clothes but in their council-chamber. This modesty was accompanied with so distinguished a probity, that before the year 1650 not one remarkable fortune had been made; but this unheard-of prodigy of virtue could not be of long duration. Warlike republics have been seen to conquer and make acquisitions for their country, and to fill the public treasury with the spoils of kingdoms. But we shall never

see the citizens of a commercial republic amass riches for a particular body in the state, from which they derive neither glory nor profit. The austerity of republican principles must of course give way to the example given by the people of the East. This relaxation of manners was more sensibly perceived in the capital of the colony, where the articles of luxury that came from all parts, and the air of magnificence it was thought necessary to throw round the administration, introduced a taste for show. This taste occasioned a corruption of manners; and this corruption of manners made all methods of getting money alike indifferent. Even the appearance of decency was so far disregarded, that a governor-general finding himself convicted of plundering the finances without the least kind of restraint, made no scruple of justifying his conduct by producing a *carte blanche* signed by the company.

How was it possible to have settled a remedy against this conduct of the governors, when their depravation could not have been foreseen in the infancy of the republic, where a purity of manners and frugality prevailed? In these settlements of the Dutch, the laws had been made for virtuous men; other manners required other laws.

These disorders might have been repressed in their first beginnings, if they had not naturally made the same progress in Europe as in Asia. But as a river that overflows its banks, collects more mud than water in its passage, so the vices which riches bring along with them increase faster than riches themselves. The post of director, which was at first allotted to able merchants, was at length vested in great families, in which it was perpetuated, together with the magistracies, by virtue of which it had been first procured. These families, engaged in political views, or in the service of administration, considered these posts which they had extorted from the company, only in the light of a considerable income, or an easy provision for their relations; some of them even as opportunities of making a bad use of their credit. The business of receiving accounts, hearing debates, and carrying on the most important transactions of the company, was left to a secretary, who, under the more plausible title of advocate, became the sole manager of all the affairs. The go-

vernors, who met but twice a-year, in spring and autumn, at the arrival and departure of the fleet, forgot the habit and track of all business which requires a constant attention. They were obliged to repose an entire confidence in a person appointed by the state to make extracts from all the dispatches that arrived from India, and to draw up the form of the answers that were to be returned. This guide, who was sometimes incapable, often bribed, and always suspicious, either threw those whom he conducted into a precipice, or suffered them to fall into it.

The spirit of commerce arises from interest, and interest always occasions disputes. Each chamber would have docks, arsenals, and magazines of its own for the ships it was to fit out. Offices were multiplied, and frauds were encouraged by a conduct so erroneous.

It was a maxim in every department to furnish goods, as it had a right to do, in proportion to the number of its ships. These goods were not equally proper for the places for which they were destined, and were either not sold at all, or sold to disadvantage.

When circumstances called for extraordinary supplies, a spirit of puerile vanity, which is afraid of betraying its weakness by confessing its wants, led them to avoid borrowing money in Holland, where they would have paid only an interest of three per cent. and to have recourse to Batavia, where money was at six, or more frequently to Bengal, or the coast of Coromandel, where it was at nine per cent. and sometimes much higher. Abuses were multiplied on all sides.

The states-general, whose business it was to examine every four years into the state of the company; to satisfy themselves that they kept within the limits assigned by their grant; to see that justice was administered to the persons concerned, and that the trade was carried on in a manner not prejudicial to the republic; should have put a stop to these irregularities, and ought to have done it. They did not do their duty upon any occasion, nor at any time. There never was presented to this assembly any other than so confused a state of accounts, that persons, the most completely versed in figures, would not have been able to clear up the chaos with the longest and most continued nocturnal labours; notwithstanding which, with

a kind of complaisance, the motives of which we should fear to search into, these accounts were always audited with unanimous approbation, without the least delay, and without the slightest discussion of the particulars.

But we are weary of giving a detail of the several irregularities that have corrupted the government of an association formerly so flourishing. The colours of this picture are too gloomy. Let us examine what remedies it would be proper to apply to evils of such number and magnitude.

THE first thing necessary is to be convinced that the government of the company is too complicated even in Europe. A direction vested in so many chambers, and in such a number of directors, must be attended with infinite inconveniencies. It is impossible that the same spirit should prevail throughout the whole, and that the transactions should be carried on without receiving a tincture from the opposite views of the persons who conduct them in different places, with independence and without harmony. Unity of design, so necessary in the fine arts, is equally advantageous in business. In vain will it be objected that it is the interest of all democratic states to divide their wealth, and to make the fortunes of the citizens as equal as possible. This maxim, in itself true, is not applicable to a republic that has no territory, and maintains itself merely by its commerce. It will therefore be expedient that every article, bought or sold, should fall under one general inspection, and be brought into one port. The savings that would be made, would be the least advantage the company would receive from this alteration.

From this place, which would be the centre of intelligence from all quarters, deputations might be sent to inquire into, and correct abuses in the remotest parts of Asia. The conduct of the Dutch towards the Indian princes, from whom they have forcibly extorted an exclusive commerce, will be one of the first objects of consideration. They have for a long time behaved to them with an insolent pride; they have attempted to learn and to lay



open the secrets of their government, and to engage them in quarrels with their neighbours; they have fomented divisions among their subjects, and shown a distrust mixed with animosity; they have obliged them to make sacrifices which they never promised; and deprived them of advantages secured to them by the terms of capitulation. All these intolerable acts of tyranny occasion frequent disturbances, which sometimes end in hostilities. To restore harmony, which is a task that grows more necessary and more difficult every day, agents should be appointed, who, with a spirit of moderation, should unite a knowledge of the interests, customs, language, religion, and manners of these nations. At present, perhaps, the company may be unprovided with persons of this stamp; but it concerns them to procure such. Perhaps too, they might find some among the superintendants of their factories, which they have every reason to induce them to abandon.

The discerning part of the merchants of all nations unanimously agree, that the Dutch settlements in India are too numerous: and that by lessening their number, they would greatly reduce their expences, without diminishing their commerce. The company cannot possibly be ignorant of what is so generally known. One would be apt to think they were induced to continue the factories that were burdensome, to prevent the suspicion of their not being in a condition to maintain them. But this weak consideration should sway them no longer. All that deserves their attention is to make a due distinction between what it is convenient to part with, or advantageous to retain. They have before them a series of facts and experience, which must prevent any mistake in an arrangement of such importance.

In the subordinate factories, which they may think proper to continue for the advantage of trade, they will demolish all useless fortifications; they will dissolve the councils, established from motives of ostentation rather than necessity; and they will proportion the number of their servants to the extent of their transactions. Let the company call to mind those happy times, when two or three factors, chosen with judgment, sent out cargoes infinitely more considerable than any they have received since; when they raised amazing profits upon their goods,

which, in process of time, have been diverted into the pockets of their numerous agents; and then they will not hesitate a moment to return to their old maxims, and and to prefer a simplicity which made them rich, to an empty parade that ruins them.

The reformation will be attended with greater difficulties in the more important colonies. The company's agents there are a more numerous, reputable, and in proportion, a more opulent body, and consequently less disposed to submit to any regulations. It is, however, necessary to reduce them to order, since the abuses they have either introduced or winked at, must sooner or later inevitably occasion the total ruin of the interests over which they preside. The malversations that prevail in the manufactures, magazines, docks, and arsenals, at Batavia, and the other large settlements, are scarcely to be paralleled.

These arrangements would lead to others still more considerable. At their first rise the company established fixed and precise rules, which were not to be departed from on any pretence, or on any occasion whatsoever. Their servants were mere machines, the smallest movements of which they had wound up before-hand. They judged this absolute and universal direction necessary to correct what was amiss in the choice of their agents, who were most of them drawn out of obscurity, and had not the advantage of that careful education which would have enlarged their ideas. The company themselves did not suffer the least variation in their own conduct; and to this invariable uniformity they attributed the success of their enterprises. The frequent misfortunes which this system occasioned did not prevail with them to lay it aside; and they always adhered obstinately to their first plan. It is necessary that they should adopt other maxims; and after having chosen their factors with more caution, that they should leave to their skill and exertions the management of concerns at so great a distance, and subject to perpetual changes. Tired of maintaining a disadvantageous struggle with the free traders of other nations, they should resolve to leave the commerce from one part of India to another, to private persons. This happy innovation would make their colonies richer and more powerful; and they would soon be filled with men

of an enterprising spirit, who would diffuse their most plentiful and most valuable productions in all the markets. They themselves would reap more advantage from the customs collected in their factories than they could possibly expect from the complicated, languid, and even unfrequent, commercial agreements transacted there.

At the same time, those two ruinous armaments, for which the company are incessantly censured, will be discontinued. Soon after the commencement of the present century, they adopted in their docks a defective mode of constructing ships, which made them lose a great number of them, and some very rich cargoes. These fatal experiments brought them back to the practice generally received; but, from some improper motives, they continued to employ in their voyages one-third more of vessels than were necessary. This instance of corruption, which ought not to have been overlooked at any time, is become more particularly insupportable, since the materials employed in naval affairs have arisen to a very exorbitant price, and since it has been necessary to increase the pay of the sailors.

These reformati<sup>o</sup>ns would bring on an extension of trade; which, in proportion to the manners and circumstances, was formerly very considerable; but the progress of it was stopped, notwithstanding the great increase of consumption in Europe, and the new markets opened with Africa and America. It was even perceived to decrease, since there was no augmentation of its produce, although the merchandize was almost doubled in value. At present the sales do not amount to more than from forty to fifty-five millions of livres [from 4,666,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to 4,875,000*l.*]; a sum which they brought sixty years ago, and even before that period.

In these colonies are found linens, tea, silks, china ware, borax, tin, camphire, tutenague, saltpetre, cotton, indigo, pepper, coffee, sugar, woods for dying, and other articles more or less considerable, bought up in different markets of Asia, or produced by the territory of the company. These productions and mercantile articles are also furnished by such of the European nations as have formed connections in India. There is scarce any thing but cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, and mace, the consumption of which

amounts annually to twelve millions of livres [500,000.] the sale of which belongs exclusively to the Dutch.

After the improvements which we have ventured to propose, order would be re-established for some time: we say for some time, because every colony, where authority and obedience to it are placed in two different countries widely distant from each other, is an establishment defective in its first institution. It is a machine, the springs of which are constantly relaxing or breaking, and which must be perpetually repaired.

If it were even possible that the company could find an effectual and lasting remedy against the evils with which they have been tormented for so long a time, they would not the less be threatened with the loss of the exclusive privilege of the spice trade.

It has long been suspected that these valuable productions grew in unknown climates. An obscure report has been spread about from all quarters, that the Malays, who were the only people that had an intercourse with these countries, had brought cloves and nutmegs into several markets. This vague rumour has never been confirmed by certain facts; and, like all vulgar errors, it has at length fallen into neglect.

In 1774, the English navigator, Forrest, set out from Balambangan, with a view of ascertaining whether the spices grew in New Guinea, as it had for a long time been asserted. At a small distance from this savage country, in the island of Manafwary, he found a nutmeg tree, the fruit of which differed only from that which has obtained so much celebrity, in being of an oblong form. This enterprising man plucked up a hundred stems of this useful tree, and planted them, in 1776, at Bunwoot, a fertile, wholesome, and inhabited island, covered with the most beautiful trees, eighteen miles only in circumference, and which Great Britain held from the liberality of the king of Mindanao. Here the nutmeg tree is undoubtedly cultivated, and probably the clove tree likewise, since it is certain that Forrest landed at several of the Moluccas.

It is a fact generally known at present and ascertained, that, in 1771 and 1772, the French have succeeded in

obtaining from the Moluccas nutmeg and clove trees, which they have transplanted into their own territories. If these plants, which have begun to yield some fruit, should one day furnish a large quantity of these spices, and of good quality, there will immediately be a revolution in this important branch of commerce. It was in the power of France to have shared with the Dutch alone this fruitful source of riches: the only thing required to secure this advantage would have been to have united in one central point, which might easily have been guarded, all the acquisitions of this kind that had been made. But the government, whether from generosity or imprudence, has chosen that this cultivation should be established in several of its possessions. A number of trees planted in so many open places, will necessarily be conveyed into the colonies of other nations; and in a little time these productions, which for ages past have been under the controul of an odious monopoly, will become a common benefit to almost all mankind. Perhaps it may happen that scarce any other people will be deprived of these valuable articles, except those who have been the ancient possessors of them. The only islands where they have hitherto grown have not, nor can they have, any other kind of utility; the maintenance of them is extremely expensive, and the climate destructive. What motives can their masters have to preserve establishments which have lost all their advantages? They will consequently abandon them; and then what will become of an association which for fifty years past has had no other resource against the treachery of its agents, the multiplicity of its factories, and the defects of its administration?

Setting aside this contest between trading interests, the Dutch have reason to be apprehensive of one of a more rapid and destructive kind. All circumstances, particularly their manner of conducting their forces both by sea and land, conspire to invite their enemies to attack them.

The company have a fleet of about a hundred ships, from six hundred to a thousand tons burden. Twenty-eight or thirty are annually sent out from Europe, and a smaller number returns. Those that are not in a condition to return make voyages in India, where the seas, except those in the neighbourhood of Japan, are so calm, that

weaker vessels may sail in them with safety. In times of profound peace the ships sail separately; but on their return they always form two fleets at the Cape, which pass by the Orcaades, where two ships belonging to the republic wait to convoy them to Holland. In time of war this detour was contrived to avoid the enemy's privateers; and it is continued in time of peace to prevent contraband trade. It did not seem an easy matter to prevail upon sailors, who were just come out of a burning climate, to encounter the cold blasts of the north; but this difficulty was surmounted by a gratuity of two months pay extraordinary. This custom has been continued, even when contrary winds and storms have driven the fleets into the channel. The directors of the chamber of Amsterdam attempted once to suppress it; but they were in danger of being burnt by the populace, who, like the rest of the nation, disapprove of the arbitrary proceedings of this powerful body, and lament the privileges they enjoy. The company's navy is commanded by officers who were originally sailors or cabin-boys; they are qualified for pilots, and for working a ship, but have not the least idea of naval evolutions; besides, that, from the defects of their education they can have no conception of the love of glory, nor are they capable of inspiring the class of men who are under their command with that noble sentiment.

The land forces are formed in a still more faulty manner. Soldiers who have deserted from every nation in Europe may, indeed, be expected not to want courage; but their provision and clothing are so bad, and they are so much harassed, that they have an aversion for the service. The officers, who for the most part originally belonged to some low profession, in which they have acquired a sum sufficient to purchase their posts, are incapable of infusing into them a military spirit. The contempt in which a people purely commercial hold those whose situation necessarily dooms them to poverty, together with the aversion they have for war, contributes greatly to degrade and dispirit these troops. To these several causes of their inactivity, weakness, and want of discipline, may be subjoined another, which is equally applicable both to the land and sea service.

There is not, perhaps, in the most slavish governments,

so dishonourable and iniquitous a mode of raising seamen and soldiers as that which has for a long time been practised by the company. Their agents, called by the people *vendeurs d'ames* (kidnappers), who are always busy in the territories, and even beyond the boundaries of the republic, make it their employment to entice credulous men to embark for India, in hopes of acquiring a considerable fortune in a short time. Those who are allured by the bait are enrolled, and receive two months pay, which is always given to their betrayer. They enter into an engagement of three hundred livres [12l. 10s.] which is the profit of the person that enlists them, who is obliged, by this agreement, to furnish them with some clothes, worth about a tenth part of that sum. The debt is secured by one of the company's bills, but it is never paid unless the debtor lives long enough to discharge it out of his pay.

A company which supports itself, notwithstanding this contempt for the military order, and with soldiers so corrupt, may enable us to judge of the progress which the arts of negotiation have made in these latter ages. It has ever been necessary to supply the want of strength by treaties, by patience, by moderation, and by artifice; but republicans should be well informed that such a state can only be a precarious one, and that political measures, how well soever they may be combined, are not always able to resist the torrent of violence and the compulsion of circumstances. The security of the company would require troops composed of citizens; but this arrangement is by no means practicable; for the depopulation of Holland would be the necessary consequence of it. The government would oppose it, and would make the following representations to this company, already too much favoured by the state

“ The defence and preservation of our country is of infinitely greater moment to us than the regulation of your affairs. Of what use would the gold be to us, with which your ships would return laden, if our provinces were to become desert? If we should ever cease to employ foreigners in our service, we shall supply their place in our armies, and not on board your ships. Let us send out of the country, and expose the lives

“ of as few of our fellow-citizens as possible. The chief  
 “ men in our factories are sufficiently opulent to preserve  
 “ themselves by all the known precautions, from the fatal  
 “ influence of a pestilential climate. Of what conse-  
 “ quence is it to us, whether a parcel of Germans, suc-  
 “ ceeding each other, should perish or not, if there are  
 “ enough still of them to be found, whom misery has  
 “ driven out of their country, or who will suffer them-  
 “ selves to be amused with the hopes of a fortune which  
 “ they will never make ? Their pay ceases the moment  
 “ they expire ; while our coffers are continually filling,  
 “ and our provinces are not thinned. The security of  
 “ the company depends upon that of the republic ; and what  
 “ will become of the security of the republic, if, by a con-  
 “ stant depopulation we should reduce our country to  
 “ the miserable condition of our colonies ? ”

The company, therefore, will never be served by any but foreign troops ; and it will never inspire them with that public spirit, that enthusiasm for glory, which it has not itself. In this respect, it is the same with a company as with a government, which ought always to form its troops upon those principles only that are the basis of its own constitution. Economy, and the desire of gain, are the principles of administration adopted by the company. These are the motives that should be employed to attach the soldier to their service. As he is engaged in commercial expeditions, he should be assured of a reward proportioned to the means he hath exerted in forwarding their success ; and his pay should be made out to him in stock. Then personal interests, far from weakening the general springs of government, will only serve to strengthen them.

If these reflections, however, should not induce the company to alter this important part of their administration, let them at least be roused by the prospect of the dangers that threaten them. If they were attacked in India, they would be deprived of their settlements there in much less time than they employed in wresting them from the Portuguese. Their best towns are in a defenceless state, and the navy would be incapable of protecting them. There is not a single ship of the line to be seen in the ports, and it would be impossible to fit out merchantmen as men of war. The strongest of those that return to Eu-



rope have not one hundred men; and if the failors, dispersed in all the ships that sail to India, were collected, there would not be a sufficient number to form one single ship's crew. Any man accustomed to calculate probable events, would not scruple to say, that the power of the Dutch might be annihilated in Asia, before the state could come to the assistance of the company. The only basis upon which this apparently gigantic colossus is fixed, is the Molucca islands. Six men of war, and fifteen hundred land forces, would be more than sufficient to secure the conquest of them, which might be effected either by the French or the English.

If the court of Versailles should form this enterprize, their squadron would sail from the isle of France, and bear down upon Ternate, where a commencement of hostilities would give the first intelligence of its arrival in those seas. A fort without outworks, and which might be battered from the ships, would not make much resistance. Amboyna, which formerly had a rampart, a bad ditch, and four small bastions, has been so frequently subverted by earthquakes, that it cannot be in a condition to put a stop to an enterprising enemy for two days. Banda has its peculiar difficulties. There is no bottom round these islands; and there are such violent currents, that, if two or three channels which lead up to it were missed, the vessels would be unavoidably carried away under the wind. But this might be easily prevented by the pilots of Amboyna. There is nothing more to attack, than a wall without a ditch, or a covert way, defended only by four bastions, in bad condition. A small fort, erected upon an eminence that commands the place, could not prolong its defence for four-and twenty hours.

All persons who have seen the Moluccas, and examined them attentively, agree, that they would not hold out one month against the forces we have mentioned. If, as it is probable, the garrisons, excessively reduced in number from motives of economy, enervated by the badness of the climate, or exasperated by the ill treatment they receive, should refuse to fight, or should make but a feeble resistance, the conquest would be more rapid. To secure it as firmly as it deserves, it would be ~~necessary~~ to take possession of Batavia; a circumstance not so difficult

as it may seem ~~to be~~. The squadron, with the soldiers that were not left in garrison, and as many of the Dutch troops as should have joined the conqueror, with a timely reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men would infallibly accomplish this enterprize.

It would not, indeed, be possible to lay siege to the place by sea. The water is generally so shallow under its walls, that the ships would never get near enough to the fortifications, to batter them. The enemy would, therefore, be obliged to land their troops for the attack. This landing, perhaps, has been made impracticable in several places, particularly at the mouth of the river which embellishes the city. But upon a flat coast, which is accessible in all parts to boats, the descent may be considered as already accomplished.

The besiegers, once established on land, would meet with nothing but a city of a league in circumference, defended by a double ditch, more or less deep; by a low rampart which is falling to ruin; by an irregular and ill-supported citadel; by a few Indians, without courage or experience, collected from different countries; by a small number of white troops dissatisfied with their condition, and commanded by officers who have neither rank nor experience. Is it to be presumed, that such obstacles would retard the progress of enterprising troops, animated with the expectations of an immense booty? Certainly not; and accordingly the hopes of the Dutch are founded upon another basis.

The climate of Batavia is so destructive, that a considerable part of the soldiers conveyed there from our countries perish in the course of the year. Many of those who escape the stroke of death are languishing in the hospitals; and scarce a fourth part remains to do the regular duty of the place. The Dutch flatter themselves, that, by adding to these ordinary causes of fatality the help of a general inundation which is easily done, they would dig a grave for the besiegers, or force them to re-embark. Blind as they are, not to see that time only can set all these means of destruction at work; and the capture of the place would be nothing more than the *coup de main* of a warlike and enterprising nation.

The plan of conquest that France might form, would

equally suit the interest of Great Britain ; with this difference, that the English would, in the first place, perhaps, make themselves masters of the Cape of Good Hope, an excellent harbour, which would facilitate their voyages to India.

The two sides of the harbour which leads up to the capital of this famous colony, are defended by a number of redoubts, judiciously disposed : but their batteries would soon be dismounted by the ships, which can anchor near enough to the land to play upon them. The fort erected near the shore would share the same fate, and would make still less resistance to the most trifling force that should attack it by land. Constructed without art, commanded on all sides and being incapable of containing more than five or six hundred troops, it would infallibly be reduced in less than four-and-twenty hours, with a few bombs. The inhabitants of the colony, dispersed throughout an immense space, and separated from each other by deserts, would not have time to come to its relief. Perhaps they would not, if it were in their power. We may be allowed to suppose, that the oppression under which they groan, may make them wish for a change of government.

*Motives which the republic may have not to suffer the ruin of the company.* If the republic of Holland should not consider as imaginary the dangers to which our regard for the general good of nations makes us apprehend her commerce and her possessions in India may be exposed, it ought to omit no precaution to prevent them ; for this is one of the most important cares it can be employed in. What advantages hath not the state acquired, for these two centuries past, from these distant regions ? What advantages does it not still derive from them ?

First, the society of merchants, who rule these several settlements, which they have formed themselves, without any assistance from government, have successively purchased the renewal of their charter. In 1602, they obtained their first grant for 55,000 livres [2291l. 13s. 4d.] Twenty years after this, it was gratuitously renewed. From 1643 to 1646, it was prolonged only ~~for~~ <sup>for six</sup> months

to six months, for reasons which we are not acquainted with. At this period, a gift of 3,300,000 livres [137,500*l.*] occasioned it to be granted a-new for five-and-twenty years. This term was not yet expired, when, in 1665, the monopoly was secured to them till 1700 upon condition that they should maintain, for the use of the state, twenty ships of war, during all the time that the hostilities, commenced between the republic and England, should continue. This privileged association was again allowed to pursue its commercial operations till 1740, for a sum of 6,600,000 livres [275,000*l.*] In the two following years, its fate was precarious: then it acquired a firm establishment for twelve years, by paying three per cent. upon the division of its shares; and afterwards, for twenty years longer, in consideration of 2,640,000 livres [110,000*l.*] to be paid in specie, or in saltpetre. In 1774, its privileges were restrained to two years, and soon extended to twenty, upon condition that it should give up three per cent. of its dividend.

In critical times, the company have stepped in to the assistance of the public treasure, already exhausted, or nearly so. It is true, they have sooner or later been reimbursed for these advances; but a conduct so noble relieved and encouraged the citizens.

A great quantity of saltpetre was wanted for the use of the sea and land service: this company has obliged itself to furnish it at a low price, and in this manner has relieved the treasury.

The manufactures of Haerlem and Leyden were decreasing every day; but their decline has been retarded, and, perhaps, their total extinction prevented, by the engagements which the company have entered into, to export to the amount of 440,000 livres [20,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] of the goods manufactured at these places. They have also agreed to furnish them with silks, upon terms, which cannot fail of being burdensome to them.

The perpetual revenue of thirty-three shares and one-third has been granted to the stadtholder; and it is to be hoped, that this sacrifice, made by the company to the first magistrate of the state, may turn out to the advantage of the republic.

The merchandize exported to India, or imported from

thence, were formerly subject to considerable taxes ; the mode of collecting which was very embarrassing. Thirty years ago, it was observed, that the regular produce of these imposts was 850,000 livres [35,416l. 13s. 4d.] and since that period, the company pays that sum into the treasury every year.

Beside the burdens which are to fall upon the company in general, the proprietors have still obligations of their own to fulfil. For more than a century past, they paid annually to the state six per cent. upon the original value of each share. In 1777, this tax was reduced to four and a half per cent. and it cannot be increased again till the dividend shall have arisen beyond twelve and a half per cent. The proprietors are also to pay upon the purchase of each share, a duty called *Ampf-Geld*, and which, from thirty-nine livres twelve sols [1l. 13s.] has been lately reduced to four livres eight sols [3s. 8d.]

Let us add to all these taxes the profits accruing to the state from the sale of forty-five millions of livres [1,875,000l.] worth of goods, obtained with four or five millions [from 166,666l. 13s. 4d. to 208,333l. 6s. 8d.] of specie, and not the fourth part of which is consumed upon the territory of the republic. Let us add the immense profits that the reselling of these goods brings in to the merchants, and the vast speculations of which it is the cause. Let us add the multiplicity and extent of private fortunes amassed formerly, as well as in our days, in India. Let us add the experience which the sailors acquire from these voyages, and the spirit they infuse into the navy, and we shall then have a proper idea of the resources the government has found from its possessions in Asia. The exclusive charter by which these possessions are holden and cultivated, ought even to procure still greater advantages to the United Provinces : the reason of this is evident.

It has ever been acknowledged by all nations, whatever the system of their government might be, that the riches acquired in any country ought to contribute to the expences of the state. The reason of this grand maxim is evident to all capacities. Private fortunes are so essentially connected with public prosperity, that, when the latter is injured, the former must necessarily suffer. Thus, when the subjects of a state serve it with their fortunes or

their persons, they do nothing more than defend their own private interests. The prosperity of the country is the prosperity of each individual. This maxim, which is true in all governments, has a particular propriety when applied to free societies.

Moreover, there are bodies of men, whose interest, either from the nature of those bodies, their extensive relations, or the variety of their views, are more essentially connected with the common interest. Of this kind is the East India company in Holland. The enemies to its trade are enemies to the republic; and its security is established on the same basis with that of the state.

In the opinion of men of the best discernment, the national debt has sensibly weakened the United Provinces, and affected the general welfare, by gradually increasing the load of taxes, of which it was the first cause. The republic can never be restored to its original splendour, till it be released from the enormous burden under which it is oppressed: and this relief can only be expected from a company, which it has always encouraged, protected, and favoured. To place this powerful body in a situation to render the highest services to the country, it will by no means be necessary to reduce the profits of the proprietors; it will be sufficient to bring them back to those principles of economy and simplicity, and to that plan of administration, which laid the foundation of their first prosperity.

A reformation so necessary will admit of no delay. This confidence is due to a government which has always endeavoured to maintain a great number of citizens within itself, and to employ only a small part of them in its distant settlements. It was at the expence of all

*Former good  
conduct of the  
Dutch, and  
their present  
degeneracy.*

Europe, that Holland was continually increasing the number of its subjects; the liberty of conscience allowed there, and the moderation of the laws, attracted all persons who were oppressed, in several other places, by a spirit of intoleration, and the severity of government.

The republic have procured means of subsistence to all persons who have been willing to settle and work among

them : the inhabitants of a country ruined by war, were seen to seek security and employment in Holland.

Agriculture could never be a considerable object in Holland, although the land was very well cultivated : but the herring fishery supplied the place of agriculture. This was a new mode of subsistence, a school for seamen. Born upon the waters, they ploughed the sea, from whence they got their food : they grew familiar with storms ; and, from the multitude of hazards to which they were exposed, they learn to overcome dangers.

The carrying trade which the republic was continually employed in from one European nation to another, was also a kind of navigation, which, without destroying men, supplied them with subsistence by labour.

In a word, navigation, which depopulates a part of Europe, peopled Holland. It was, as it were, the produce of the country. Her ships were her landed estates, which she made the most of, at the expence of the stranger.

Few of the inhabitants of Holland knew any thing of those conveniencies of life which could only be procured at a very high price ; all, or almost all of them, were unacquainted with luxury. A spirit of order, frugality, and even avarice, prevailed throughout the nation, and was carefully kept up by the government.

The colonies were conducted by the same spirit.

The design of preserving their population prevailed in the military system ; the republic maintained a great number of foreign troops in Europe, and some in the colonies.

The sailors in Holland were well paid ; and foreign seamen were constantly employed either on board their trading vessels, or their men of war.

For the purposes of commerce, it is necessary that harmony should be preserved at home, and peace abroad. No people, except the Swiss, took more care to keep on good terms with their neighbours ; and they endeavoured, still more than the Swiss, to encourage peace among them.

The republic had intended to preserve unanimity among her citizens by very excellent laws, which should prescribe the duties of every station, by a speedy and disinterested

administration of justice, and by regulations admirably well adapted to the merchants. She felt the necessity of good faith, shewed it by her observance of treaties, and endeavoured to inculcate the same principle among individuals.

In a word, we know of no nation in Europe that had considered better what its united advantages of situation, strength, and population, allowed it to undertake ; or that had known and followed more effectually the means of increasing both its population and its strength. We know of none, which having such objects in view as an extensive commerce and liberty mutually attracting and supporting each other, hath conducted itself in a better manner for the preservation of both the one and the other.

But how are these manners already changed and degenerated from the purity of a republican government ! Personal interests, which become laudable by being combined, are now totally selfish, and corruption is become general. There is no patriotism in that country, which, above all others in the universe, should inspire its inhabitants with more steadfast attachments.

What patriotic sentiments, indeed, might we not expect from a nation that can say to itself, this land which I inhabit, has been fertilized by me ; it is I who have embellished, who have created it. This threatening sea, which deluged all our plains, rages in vain against the powerful dikes I have opposed to its fury. I have purified this air, which stagnant waters had filled with fatal exhalations. It is by my means that superb cities stand now upon the slime and mud over which the ocean once rolled its waves. The ports I have constructed, the canals I have digged, receive the productions of the whole universe, which I dispense at pleasure. The inheritances of other nations are only possessions which man disputes with man ; that which I shall leave to my posterity, I have ravished from the elements which conspired against my territory, and am now the master of it. Here it is that I have established a new arrangement of nature, a new system of morality. I have done every thing where there was nothing. Air, land, government, liberty, all these are my works. I enjoy the glory of the past : and when I cast a look into futurity, I see with satisfaction that my ashes will rest quietly on the



same spot where my forefathers saw the breaking of storms.

What motives these for idolizing one's country ! Yet there is no longer any public spirit in Holland : it is a whole, the parts of which have no other relation among themselves than the spot they occupy. Meanness, baseness, and dishonesty, characterise now the conquerors of Philip. They make a traffic of their oath as of their merchandize ; and they will soon become the refuse of the universe, which they had astonished by their industry and by their virtues.

Men, unworthy of the government under which ye live, shudder at least at the dangers that surround you ! Those that have slavish souls, are not far removed from slavery. The sacred fire of liberty can only be kept up by chaste hands. Ye are not now in the same state of anarchy as when the sovereigns of Europe, all equally opposed by the nobles in their respective states, could not carry on their designs either with secrecy, unanimity, or dispatch ; as when the equilibrium of the several powers was merely the effect of their mutual debility. At present, power grown more independent, confirms those advantages to a monarchy, which a free state can never enjoy. What have republicans to oppose to a superiority so formidable ? Their virtues ; but ye have lost them. The corruption of your manners, and of your magistrates, encourages everywhere the detractors of liberty ; and perhaps your fatal example is the means of imposing a heavier yoke on other nations. What answer would you wish us to make to those men, who either from the prejudice of education or from misrepresentations, are perpetually telling us, this is the government which you extol so much in your writings ; these are the happy consequences of that system of liberty you hold so dear ? To those vices which you have laid to the charge of despotism, they have added another, which surpasses them all, the inability to stop the progress of evil. What answer can be given to so severe a satire on democracy ?

Industrious Batavians, formerly so poor, so brave, and so formidable, at present so opulent and so feeble, tremble at the idea of being again reduced to crouch under the yoke of arbitrary power, which you have thrown off, and

which still threatens you. It is not I who give you this caution; it is the voice of your ancestors which thus calls out to you from the bottom of their tombs.

“ Was it then to be reserved for this ignominy, that  
 “ we purpled the seas with our blood, and stained this  
 “ land with it? The wretchedness which we could not  
 “ support, is that which ye are preparing for yourselves.  
 “ That gold which ye accumulate and hold so dear, is that  
 “ which has placed you under the dependence of one of  
 “ your enemies. Ye tremble in his presence, from apprehensions that ye shall lose the riches ye have entrusted him with. Whenever he commands, you obey. Alas! let these perfidious riches go, if it be necessary, and recover your dignity. Then it is, that rather than submit to the yoke, whatever it may be, you will choose to throw down with your own hands the barriers you have raised against the sea, and to bury yourselves, together with your enemies, under the waters.

“ But if, in your present abject and pusillanimous state, it should happen that ambition should lead again a hostile army into the centre of your provinces, or under the walls of your capital; say, how would you act upon such an event? You are told that you must in a moment either resolve to open the gates of your city to the enemy, or to burst your dikes. Would you hesitate and exclaim: OUR DIKES! OUR DIKES! But we perceive that you turn pale. Alas! We see too plainly that your wretched descendants do not retain one spark of the virtue of their ancestors.

“ What strange infatuation could induce them to give themselves a master? But what more strange infatuation still could lead them to perpetuate his authority, by rendering it hereditary. We should say, Woe! to those persons who flattered themselves that they should alternately maintain their sway over the prince, by the gratitude he owed them, and over the republic, by the support they should have from the prince, if they had not themselves been the victims of their base policy, and if it had not plunged them into retirement and obscurity; punishments of the severest kind to men of intrigue and ambition. A free and commercial people, giving themselves a master! A people to whom liberty

“ should appear the more precious, as they have the more  
 “ reasons to fear that their projects should be made known,  
 “ their speculations interrupted, their enterprises thwarted,  
 “ the posts of the state filled by traitors, and those of  
 “ their colonies bestowed on unworthy foreigners. You  
 “ trust in the justice and good sentiments of your present  
 “ chief, and perhaps with reason. But who will insure to  
 “ you that his virtues shall be transmitted to his succeſ-  
 “ ſor; or from him to the next, and so on from one  
 “ generation to another, to all the posterity that shall de-  
 “ scend from him?

“ O ye, our fellow-citizens and our children! may fu-  
 “ ture events disprove this fatal prophecy! But if you  
 “ would but reflect one moment, or if you had the  
 “ least concern for the fate of your progeny, you  
 “ would already see preparing before your eyes the chains  
 “ that are destined for them. They are foreigners who  
 “ line the decks of your ships; they are foreigners who  
 “ compose and command your armies. Look into the  
 “ historical annals of all nations; read and shudder at the  
 “ necessary consequences of so imprudent a step. That  
 “ opulence which lulls you in a state of lethargy, and  
 “ keeps you in subjection to a power that is your rival,  
 “ that very opulence itself will excite the cupidity of that  
 “ power which you have created in the midst of your-  
 “ selves. You will be deprived of it, and at the same  
 “ time of your liberty. You will be annihilated; for you  
 “ will seek for your courage within yourselves, and you  
 “ will not find it.

“ Be not deceived; your present condition is more de-  
 “ plorable than ours ever was. The advantage of an in-  
 “ digent people groaning under oppression is, that they  
 “ have nothing to lose but life, which is a burden to them.  
 “ The misfortune of a people enervated by riches is, that  
 “ they lose all for want of courage to defend them.  
 “ Rouse yourselves, therefore, and behold the successive  
 “ progress of your degradation. Behold how much you  
 “ are fallen off from that state of splendour to which we  
 “ had raised ourselves; and endeavour to ascend to it  
 “ again, if however it be still practicable.

This is what your illustrious and brave ancestors declare  
 to you by my voice. Of what consequence, you will an-  
 ſwer me, are our present decline, of our future misfortunes

to you? Are you our fellow citizen? Have you any dwelling, any wife, any children in our cities? I reply; of what concern is it to you where I was born, who I am, or where I dwell, if what I tell you be but the truth? Did the ancients ever ask the augur in what country he had first seen the light; or upon what oak rested the prophetic bird which announced them a victory or a defeat? Batavians, the destiny of every commercial nation is to be rich, effeminate, corrupt, and subdued. Ask yourselves what you have to expect.

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## BOOK III.

### SETTLEMENTS, TRADE, AND CONQUESTS, OF THE ENGLISH IN THE EAST INDIES.

WE are totally unacquainted either with the period in which the British isles were peopled, or with the origin of their first inhabitants. All we can learn from the most authentic historical records, is, that they were successively visited by the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, and the Gauls. The traders of these nations used to go there to exchange earthen vessels, salt, all kinds of iron and copper instruments, for skins, slaves, hounds, and bull-dogs, and especially for tin. The commodities exchanged were valued in proportion to their utility. Such mercantile articles were brought to these people, as they undoubtedly set a higher value upon, than those which they offered in exchange. Neither of these parties are to be accused either of ignorance or dishonesty. To whatever country of the universe we may repair, men will always be found as cunning as ourselves; and they will ever give those things they esteem the least,

in return for those which are in greater repute among them.

A mere loose speculation would lead us to imagine, that islanders have been the first civilized people among mankind. Nothing puts a stop to the excursions of people living on a continent: they may rove about in quest of subsistence, and yet withdraw themselves from the scene of war. In islands, it should seem, that the establishment of laws and mutual compacts, must of course become sooner necessary, from the unavoidable conflicts of war, and the inconveniencies of a too limited society. We observe, on the contrary, that the manners and the government of islanders, are formed later and more imperfectly. It is among these people that we trace the origin of that multitude of singular institutions that retard the progress of population. Anthropophagy, the castration of males, the infibulation of females, late marriages, the consecration of virginity, the approbation of celibacy, the punishments exercised against girls who become mothers at too early an age; perhaps also fastings, self-denials, and all those extravagancies that would arise in convents, if there were a monastery of men and women intermixed, in which the number of the former was by far the greatest, and without any possibility of emigration.

When these islanders have found out the means of escaping from the narrow circuit in which natural causes had confined them during a series of ages, they carry their customs along with them to the continents, where they have been perpetuated from one century to another, and where philosophers of our days are still embarrassed to investigate the reason of them. The superabundance of population in islands, was the cause of the tardy progress of civilization among their inhabitants; since it became necessary to put a continual stop to that superabundance by violent measures. An extreme state of barbarism prevails upon that spot, where the members of the same family are compelled to extirpate each other. It is the intercourse of people among themselves, which diminishes their ferocity, as it is their separation from each other which contributes to prolong it. The islanders of our days have not entirely lost their primitive character; and perhaps an at-



tentive observer might find some traces of it even in Great Britain.

The dominion of the Romans was not sufficiently durable, nor sufficiently uninterrupted to improve, in any considerable degree, the industry of the Britons. Even the small progress that husbandry and the arts had made during this period, was lost as soon as that haughty power had determined to abandon this conquest. The spirit of slavery which the southern inhabitants of Britain had contracted, deprived them of the courage necessary to resist, at first, the overflowings of their neighbours the Picts, who had saved themselves from the yoke by flying towards the north of the island, and prevented them afterwards from being able to oppose the more destructive, more obstinate, and more numerous, expeditions of plunderers, that poured in swarms from the northern parts of Europe.

All nations were affected with this dreadful scourge, the most destructive, perhaps, that ever was recorded in the annals of the world ; but the calamities which Great Britain particularly experienced are inexpressible. Every year, several times even in a year, her countries were ravaged, her houses burnt, her women ravished, her temples stripped, her inhabitants massacred, put to torture, or enslaved. All these misfortunes succeeded each other with inconceivable rapidity. When the country was so far destroyed that nothing remained to glut the avidity of these barbarians, they seized on the land itself. One nation succeeded another. One band supervening, expelled or exterminated the one that was already established ; and this succession of revolutions constantly kept up indolence, mistrust, and misery. In this dispiriting times, the Britons had scarce any commercial connection with the continent. Exchanges were even so rare among them, that it was necessary to have witnesses for the sale of the least trifle.

It might have been expected that the union of the two kingdoms would have put a stop to these calamities, when William the Conqueror subdued Great Britain a little while after the middle of the eleventh century. His followers came from countries rather more civilized, more active, and more industrious, than those they came to settle in. Such a communication ought naturally to have

rectified and enlarged the ideas of the conquered people. Unfortunately the introduction of the feudal government occasioned so speedy and so complete a revolution in matters of property, that every thing was thrown into confusion.

The minds of men were scarcely settled, and the conquerors and the conquered had just begun to consider themselves as one and the same people, when the abilities and strength of the nation were engaged in supporting the pretensions of their sovereigns to the crown of France. In these obstinate wars, the English displayed military talents and courage; but, after several great efforts, and considerable success, they were forced back into their island, where domestic troubles exposed them to fresh calamities.

During these different periods, the whole commerce was in the hands of the Jews and the bankers of Lombardy, who were alternately favoured and robbed, considered as useful persons, and condemned to death, expelled, and recalled. These tumults were increased by the audacity of the pirates, who, being sometimes protected by the government, with which they shared their spoils, attacked all ships indiscriminately, and frequently sank their crews. The interest of money was at fifty per cent. Leather, furs, butter, lead, and tin, were the only things exported from England at a very moderate rate, and thirty thousand sacks of wool, which returned annually a more considerable sum. As the English were then totally unacquainted with the art of dyeing this wool, and manufacturing it with elegance, the greatest part of this money returned. To remedy this inconvenience, foreign manufacturers were invited, and the people were prohibited from wearing any clothes that were not of home manufacture. At the same time, the exportation of manufactured wool and wrought iron was forbidden; two laws altogether worthy of the age in which they were instituted.

Henry VII permitted the barons to dispose of their lands, and the common people to buy them. This regulation diminished the inequality which subsisted before between the fortunes of the lords and their vassals; it made the latter more independent, and inspired the people



with a desire of enriching themselves, and with the hope of enjoying their riches. There were many obstacles to this wish and this hope; some of which were removed. The company of merchants established at London was prevented from exacting in future the sum of one thousand five hundred and seventy-five livres [65l 10s. 6d.] from each of the other merchants in the kingdom, desirous of trading at the great fairs of the Low Countries. In order to fix a greater number of people to the labours of husbandry, it was enacted, that no person should put his son or daughter out to any kind of apprenticeship, without being possessed of a revenue of twenty-two livres ten sols [18s. 4d.] in landed property: this absurd law was afterwards mitigated.

Unfortunately that law which regulated the price of all sorts of provisions, of woollens, of workmen's wages, of stuffs, and of clothing, was maintained in full force. Other impediments even were thrown in the way of commerce, on account of some pernicious combinations that were set on foot. It was a circumstance then unknown, that money, which is the representative of every thing, is, in its turn, represented by all vendible articles; that it is a commodity, which, like all others, must be left to itself; that the value of it must necessarily rise or diminish every instant, from an infinite number of different incidents; that every regulation of policy upon this matter cannot but be absurd and detrimental; that one of the means of multiplying usurers is to forbid usury, because this prohibition becomes an exclusive privilege for any one who sets the sense of shame at defiance; that every law is ridiculous whenever there are positive means of eluding it; that the general competition which would arise from an unlimited liberty of trading with money, would necessarily reduce it to a lower interest; that ruinous loans, which it is the intention to prevent, would be less frequent, since the borrower would have nothing to pay but the value of the money borrowed: whereas, in the present state of things, we must add to this value the price which the userer sets upon his conscience, upon his honour, and upon the risk he runs of committing an illegal act; a price which rises in proportion to the scarcity of usurers.

and to the rigour with which the prohibitive law is observed.

From the same want of discernment, the exportation of money in any kind of coin was forbidden; and, in order to prevent foreign merchants from carrying it clandestinely away, they were compelled to change into English merchandize the entire produce of the goods they had brought into England. The exportation of horses was likewise prohibited; and the people were not sufficiently enlightened to discover that such a prohibition would necessarily cause the propagation and improvement of the species to be neglected. At length, corporations were established in all the towns; that is to say, the state authorised all persons of the same profession to make such regulations as they should think necessary for their exclusive preservation and success. The nation is still oppressed with a regulation so contrary to general industry, and which reduces every thing to a kind of monopoly.

Upon considering such a number of strange laws, we might be induced to think that Henry was either indifferent about the prosperity of his kingdom, or that he was totally deficient in understanding. Nevertheless, it is certain that this prince, notwithstanding his extreme avarice, often lent considerable sums of money, without interest, to merchants who had not property sufficient to carry on the schemes they had planned: besides, the wisdom of his government is so well confirmed, that he is accounted, with reason, one of the greatest monarchs that ever sat upon the throne of England. But, notwithstanding all the efforts of genius, it requires a succession of several ages before any science can be reduced to simple principles. It is the same thing with theories as with machines, which are always very complicated at first, and which are only freed in the course of time, by observation and experience from those useless wheels which served merely to increase their friction.

The knowledge of the succeeding reigns was not much more extensive upon those matters we are treating of. Some Flemings, settled in England, were the only good workmen in that country; they were almost always insulted and oppressed by the English workmen, who were jealous of them without emulation. The latter complain-

ed that all the customers went to the Flemings, and that these occasioned a rise in the price of corn. The government adopted these popular prejudices, and forbade all strangers to employ more than two workmen in their shops. The merchants were not better treated than the workmen; and those even who were naturalized were obliged to pay the same duties as aliens. Ignorance was so general, that the cultivation of the best lands was neglected, in order to convert them into pastures, even at the time that the number of sheep which might be in one flock was restrained by the laws to two thousand. All mercantile correspondencies were centred in the Low Countries. The inhabitants of these provinces bought the English commodities, and circulated them through the different parts of Europe. It is probable that the nation would not have for a long time emerged from this situation, had it not been for a concurrence of favourable circumstances.

The duke of Alva's cruelties drove several able manufacturers into England, who carried the art of the fine Flemish manufactures to London. The persecutions which the protestants suffered in France supplied England with workmen of all kinds. Elizabeth, impatient of contradiction, but knowing and desirous of doing what was right, at once despotic and popular, with the advantages of a good understanding, and of being properly obeyed, availed herself of the fermentation of men's minds, as prevalent throughout all her dominions as through the rest of Europe; and while this fermentation produced, among other nations, nothing but theological disputes, and civil or foreign wars, in England it gave rise to a lively spirit of emulation for commerce, and for the improvement of navigation.

The English learned to build their ships at home, which they bought before of the merchants of Lubec and Hamburg. They were soon the only persons who traded to Muscovy by the way of Archangel, newly discovered; and they presently became competitors with the Hanse towns in Germany, and in the north. They began to trade with Turkey. Several of their navigators attempted, though in vain, to discover a passage to India by the northern seas. At length, Drake, Stephens, Cavendish, and

some others, reached that place, some by the South sea, and others by doubling the Cape of Good Hope.

*First voyages of the English to India.* THE success of these voyages was sufficient to determine the most able merchants in London to establish a company in the year 1600, which obtained an exclusive privilege of trading to the East Indies. The act which granted this privilege fixed it for fifteen years. It declared, that if it should prove injurious to the state, it should be annulled, and the company suppressed, by giving two years previous notice to its members.

This clause of reserve arose from the displeasure the commons had lately shewn on account of a grant, the novelty of which might possibly offend them. The queen had returned to the house, and had spoken on this occasion in a manner worthy to serve as a lesson to all sovereigns.

“Gentlemen,” said she to the members of the house commissioned to return her thanks, “I am extremely sensible of your attachment, and of the care you have taken to give me an authentic testimony of it. This affection for my person had determined you to apprise me of a fault I had inadvertently fallen into from ignorance, but in which my will had no share. If your vigilance had not discovered to me the mischiefs which my mistake might have produced, what pain should I not have felt—I, who have nothing dearer to me than the affection and preservation of my people? May my hand suddenly wither, may my heart be struck at once with a deadly blow, before I shall ever grant particular privileges that my subjects may have reason to complain of! The splendour of the throne has not so far dazzled my eyes, that I should prefer the abuse of an unbounded authority to the use of a power exercised by justice. The brilliancy of royalty blinds only those princes who are ignorant of the duties that the crown imposes. I dare believe that I shall not be ranked among such monarchs. I know that I hold not the sceptre for my own proper advantage, and that I am entirely devoted to the society which has put its confidence in me. It is my happiness to see that the state has hitherto prof-

“ pered under my government ; and that my subjects are  
“ worthy that I should yield up my crown and my life  
“ for their sakes. Impute not to me the improper mea-  
“ sures I may be engaged in, nor the irregularities which  
“ may be committed under the sanction of my name.  
“ You know that the ministers of princes are too often  
“ guided by private interests, that truth seldom reaches  
“ the ears of kings, and that, obliged as they are, from  
“ the multiplicity of affairs they are laden with, to fix  
“ their attention on those which are of the greatest im-  
“ portance, it is impossible they should see every thing  
“ with their own eyes.”

From the perusal of this wise speech we should be inclined to believe, that an absolute monarch, who is just, steady, and enlightened, would be the best of princes : but on the other hand, we should consider, that if his reign were to be lasting, the people would neglect the assertion of those rights, of which they would have no occasion to avail themselves ; and that nothing could be more fatal to them than the continuation of this lethargy, under a reign similar to the first, unless it be the prolongation of it under a third. Nations sometimes make attempts to deliver themselves from an oppression imposed by violence ; but never strive to set themselves free from a state of slavery, into which they have been led by mild and gentle proceedings. Sooner or later a tyrant, either weak-minded, or cruel, or devoid of understanding, will succeed to the management of an absolute power which has never been opposed. The people who are the victims of this despotism, think they are destined to be so. They have lost the sense of liberty, which can only be maintained by perpetual exertion. Perhaps, had the English been governed by three successive sovereigns similar to Elizabeth, they would have been the most abject of all slaves.

The funds of this company were, at first, far from being considerable. Part of them was expended in fitting out a fleet of four ships, which sailed in the beginning of the year 1601 ; and the rest was sent abroad in money and merchandize.

Lancaster, who commanded the expedition, arrived the year following, at the port of Achem, which was at that time a very celebrated mart. Intelligence had been re-

ceived there of the victories gained by the English over the Spaniards at sea; and this intelligence procured him a most distinguished reception. The king behaved to him in the same manner as if he had been his equal; he ordered that his own wives, richly habited, should play several airs in his presence, on a variety of instruments. This favour was followed by all the compliances that could be wished for to facilitate the establishment of a safe and advantageous commerce. The English admiral was received at Bantam in the same manner as at the place where he first landed; and a ship, which he had dispatched to the Molucca islands, brought him a considerable cargo of cloves and nutmegs. With these valuable spices, and the pepper he took in at Java and Sumatra he returned safe to Europe.

This early success determined the society, who had intrusted their interests in the hands of this able man, to form settlements in India; but not without the consent of the natives. They did not wish to begin with conquests. Their expeditions were nothing more than the enterprises of humane and fair traders. They conciliated to themselves the affection of the people; but this procured them no advantage, except a few factories; and they were in no condition to sustain the rivalry of other nations that had made themselves formidable.

The Portuguese and the Dutch were in possession of large provinces, well fortified places, and good harbours. By these advantages their trade was secured against the natives of the country, and against new competitors; their return to Europe was facilitated; and they had opportunities of getting a good sale for the commodities they carried to Asia, and of purchasing those they wanted at a moderate price. The English, on the contrary, exposed to the caprice of seasons and of the people, having no strength or place of security, and deriving their supplies from England only, could not according to the ideas then prevailing, carry on an advantageous trade. They thought that it was difficult to acquire great riches without great injustice, and that in order to surpass or even equal the nations they had censured, they must pursue the same conduct. This was an error which led them into false measures. With maxims more salutary they would have been.

sensible, that if goodness, mildness, benevolence, and humanity, do not lead to prosperity so rapidly as violence; yet the power that is fixed upon so respectable a basis will be more firm and durable. By tyranny, a precarious authority, and a disturbed possession, can only be obtained; while that which flows from justice, attracts, in the end, every thing to its own centre. The dominion of force is considered as a scourge; that of virtue as a blessing: and I never can be convinced, that it is a matter of indifference, whether we make our appearance before foreign nations in the character of infernal spirits or in that of celestial beings.

The plan of forming lasting settlements, and of attempting conquests, seemed too great to be accomplished by the forces of an infant society: but they flattered themselves that they should meet with protection, because they thought themselves useful. They were disappointed in their expectations. They could obtain nothing from James I, a weak prince, infected with the false philosophy of his age, a man of wit, of a subtle and pedantic genius, and better qualified to be at the head of an university than to preside over an empire. By their activity, perseverance, and judicious choice of officers and factors, the company provided those succours which were refused them by their sovereign. They erected forts, and founded colonies in the islands of Java, Poleron, Amboyna, and Banda. In this manner they shared the spice trade with the Dutch, which will always be the most certain branch of eastern commerce, because the objects of it are become necessary articles of life. It was of more importance at the time we are speaking of, because the luxury which arises from caprice had not then made so much progress in Europe as it has done since, and because there was not that prodigious demand for India linens, stuffs, teas, and Chinese varnish, that there is at present.

THE Dutch had not driven the Portuguese from the spice-islands with a view of suffering a nation to settle there, whose maritime force, character, and form of government, rendered their rivalry still more formidable. They had many advantages on their side, such as powerful colonies, a well-exercised navy, firm al-

*Disputes between  
the English and  
Dutch*

liances, a great fund of wealth, a knowledge of the country, and of the principles and details of commerce; while the English, who were deficient in all these particulars, were attacked in all possible ways.

The first step their rival took, was to drive them from the fertile places, where they had formed settlements. In the islands where their power was established, they endeavoured, by accusations, equally void of truth and decency, to make them odious to the natives of the country. These shameful expedients not meeting with all the success the Dutch expected, those avaricious trades resolved to proceed to acts of violence. An extraordinary occasion brought on the commencement of hostilities sooner than it was imagined.

It is a custom at Java for the new-married women to dispute with their husbands the first favours of love. This kind of contest, which the men take a pride in terminating immediately, and the women in protracting as long as possible, sometimes lasts several weeks. From whence can this capricious refinement of coquetry proceed, since it exists not in the nature of man, nor in that of the brute? Does the Javanese woman intend, by this conduct, to inspire her husband with confidence in her morals both before and after marriage? Does she mean to irritate his passions, which are always more violent in a ravisher than in a favoured lover? Or, does she think of enhancing the value she sets upon her charms, upon her favours, and upon the sacrifice of her liberty? The king of Bantam having just overcome the resistance of a new bride, made public entertainments in celebration of his triumph. The strangers in the harbour were invited to these festivals. The English, unfortunately for them, were treated with too much distinction. The Dutch looked with a jealous eye upon this preference, and did not defer revenge a moment. They attack them on all sides.

The Indian ocean became, at this period, the scene of the most bloody engagements between the maritime forces of the two nations. They fought out, attacked, and combated, each other with the spirit of men who chose to conquer or to die. Equal courage appeared on both sides, but their was a disparity in their forces. The English were on the point of being overcome, when some



moderate people in Europe, which the flames of war had not reached, endeavoured to find out the means of accommodating their differences. By an infatuation, which it is not easy to explain, the very strangest of all was adopted.

In 1619, the two companies signed a treaty, the purport of which was, that the Molucca islands, Amboyna, and Banda, should belong in common to the two nations : that the English should have one third, and the Dutch two thirds of the produce at a fixed price : that each, in proportion to the benefit they received, should contribute to the defence of these islands : that a council, composed of skilful men of both parties should regulate all the affairs of commerce at Batavia : that this agreement, guaranteed by the respective sovereigns, should last twenty years : and that, if any differences should arise during this interval that could not be settled by the two companies, they should be determined by the king of Great Britain and the states-general of the United Provinces. Among all the political conventions preserved in history, it would be difficult to find a more extraordinary one than this. It met with the fate it deserved.

The Dutch in India were no sooner informed of it, than they devised means to render it ineffectual. The situation of affairs favoured their designs. The Spaniards and the Portuguese had taken advantage of the disputes between their enemies, to regain the settlements in the Moluccas. They might fortify themselves there ; and it was dangerous to give them time. The English commissaries concurred with them in opinion, that it would be best to attack them without delay ; but added, that they were not in the least prepared to act in concert with them. This declaration, which was expected, was registered ; and their associates embarked alone in an expedition, all the advantages of which they reserved to themselves. The agents of the Dutch company had only one step further to go, to get all the spices into the hands of their masters, which was, to drive their rivals from the island of Amboyna. The method by which they succeeded in this project was very extraordinary.

A Japanese, in the Dutch service at Amboyna, made himself suspected by his imprudent curiosity. He was

seized, and confessed that he had entered into an engagement with the soldiers of his nation, to deliver up the fort to the English. His comrades confirmed his account, making the same confession. Upon these unanimous depositions, the authors of the conspiracy, who did not disavow, but even acknowledged it, were loaded with irons; and the ignominious death which all the criminals were condemned to suffer, put an end to the plot. This is the account given by the Dutch.

The English have always considered this accusation as the suggestion of an unbounded avarice. They have maintained, that it was absurd to suppose, that ten factors and eleven foreign soldiers could have formed the project of seizing upon a place which was garrisoned by two hundred men; that even if these unhappy persons had thought it possible to execute so extravagant a plan, they would have been discouraged by the impossibility of obtaining succours to defend them against an enemy who would have besieged them on all sides. To make a conspiracy of this kind probable, it requires stronger proof than a confession extorted from the accused by extremity of torture. The torments of the rack never afforded any other proof, than that of the courage or weakness of those whom barbarous custom had condemned to it. These considerations, strengthened by several others almost equally convincing, have made the story of the conspiracy of Amboyna so suspected, that it has generally been considered as a mere excuse for the most atrocious avarice.

The ministry of James I and the whole nation, were at that time so engaged in ecclesiastical subtleties, and the discussion of the rights of king and people, that they were not sensible of the insults offered to the English name in the East. This indifference produced a caution which soon degenerated into weakness. These islanders, however, maintained the bravery of their character better at Coromandel and Malabar.

*Disputes of the  
English with the  
Portuguese.*

THEY had established factories at Mazulipatam, Calicut, and several other ports, and even at Delhi. Surat, the richest mart in these countries, tempted their ambition in 1611. The inhabitants were disposed

to receive them ; but the Portuguese declared, that if this nation were suffered to make a settlement, they would burn all the towns upon the coast, and seize all the Indian vessels. The government was awed by these menaces. Middleton, disappointed in his hopes, was obliged to abandon the place, and return through a numerous fleet, to which he did more damage than he received from it.

Captain Thomas Best arrived in these latitudes the year following, with a very considerable force. He was received at Surat without any opposition. The agents he carried out with him had scarce entered upon their employments when a formidable armament from Goa made its appearance. The English admiral, reduced to this alternative, either of betraying the interests he was entrusted with, or of exposing himself to the greatest danger in defending them, did not hesitate what part he should take. He twice attacked the Portuguese, and, notwithstanding the great inferiority of his squadron, gained the victory each time. However, the advantage the vanquished derived from their position, their ports, and their fortresses, always made the English navigation in Guzarat very difficult. They were obliged to maintain a constant struggle against an obstinate enemy that was not discouraged by defeats. No tranquillity was to be obtained, but at the price of new contests and new triumphs.

THE news of these glorious successes *The English form*  
against a nation which had hitherto *connections with*  
been thought invincible, reached as far *Persia.*

as the capital of Persia. This vast country, so celebrated in antiquity, appears to have been free at the first institution of its government. The monarchy rose upon the ruins of a depraved republic. The Persians were long happy under this form of government ; their manners were as simple as their laws. At length, the sovereigns were inspired with the spirit of conquest. At that time, the treasures of Assyria, the spoils of many trading nations, and the tribute arising from a vast number of provinces, brought immense riches into the empire, which soon occasioned a total alteration. The disorders rose to such a pitch, that the care of the public amuse-

ments seemed to engage the chief attention of government.

A people, totally devoted to pleasure, could not fail, in a short time, of being reduced to slavery. They were successively brought into that state by the Macedonians, the Parthians, the Arabians, and the Tartars, and towards the close of the fifteenth century by the Sophis, who pretended to be the descendants of Aly, author of the famous reformation, by which mahomedism was divided into two branches.

No prince of this new race made himself so famous as Schah-Abbas, surnamed the Great. He conquered Candahar, several places of importance upon the Black sea, part of Arabia, and drove the Turks out of Georgia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and all the countries they had conquered beyond the Euphrates.

These victories produced remarkable changes in the interior administration of the empire. The great men took advantage of the civil broils to make themselves independent; they were degraded, and all posts of consequence were given to strangers, who had neither the power nor inclination to raise factions. The army having taken upon themselves to dispose of the crown at their pleasure; they were restrained by foreign troops, whose religion and customs were different. Anarchy had inclined the people to sedition; and to prevent this, the towns and villages were filled with inhabitants chosen out of nations whose manners and character bore no resemblance to those of the ancient inhabitants. These arrangements gave rise to a despotism the most absolute, perhaps, that any country has ever experienced.

It is a matter of astonishment, that the great Abbas should have combined some views of public utility with this government, which was naturally oppressive. He patronized the arts and established them in the capital and in the provinces. All persons who brought into his dominions talents of any kind, were sure of being well received, assisted, and rewarded. He would often say, that strangers were the best ornaments of an empire, and added more to the dignity of the prince than the pomp of the most refined luxury.

While Persia was rising from its ruins by the different

branches of industry that were everywhere established, a number of Armenians, transplanted to Ispahan, carried the spirit of commerce into the heart of the empire. In a little time, these traders, and the natives of the country who followed their example, spread themselves over the East, into Holland, England, the Mediterranean, and the Baltic, and wherever commerce was carried on with spirit and advantage. The sophi himself bore a part in their enterprizes, and advanced them considerable sums, which they employed to advantage in the most celebrated marts in the world. They were obliged to return the capital on the terms agreed upon, and if they had increased it by their industry, he granted them some recompense.

The Portuguese, who found that part of the Indian trade with Asia and Europe was likely to be diverted to Persia, imposed restraints upon it. They would not suffer the Persians to purchase merchandize anywhere but from their magazines: they fixed the price of it; and if they sometimes allowed it to be taken at the places where it was manufactured, it was always to be carried in their own bottoms, charging all expences of freight and exorbitant customs. This stretch of power displeased the great Abbas, who being informed of the resentment of the English, proposed to unite their maritime strength with his land forces, to besiege Ormus. This place was attacked by the combined arms of the two nations, and taken in the year 1623, after a contest that lasted two months. The conquerors divided the spoil, which was immense, and afterwards totally demolished the place.

Three or four leagues from hence the harbour of Gombroon presented itself, since called Bender-Abassi. Nature seemed not to have designed that it should be inhabited. It is situated at the foot of a ridge of mountains of an excessive height; the air you breathe seems to be on fire; fatal vapours are continually exhaling from the bowels of the earth; the fields are black and dry, as if they had been scorched with fire. Notwithstanding these inconveniencies, as Bender-Abassi had the advantage of being placed at the entrance of the gulf, the Persian monarch chose to make it the centre of the extensive trade he intended to carry on with India. The English joined, in this project. A perpetual exemption from all imposts, and a moiety of

the product of the customs, were granted them, on condition that they should maintain, at least, two men of war in the gulf. This precaution was thought necessary to frustrate the attempts of the Portuguese, whose resentment was still to be dreaded.

From this Bender-Abassi, which was before a poor fishing-town, became a flourishing city. The English carried thither spices, pepper, and sugar, from the markets of the East; and iron, lead, and cloths, from the ports of Europe. The profits arising from these commodities were increased by the very high freight paid them by the Armenians, who were still in possession of the richest branch of the Indian commerce.

These merchants had, for a long time, been concerned in the linen trade. They had never been supplanted either by the Portuguese, who were intent only on plunder, or by the Dutch, whose attention was totally confined to the spice trade. They might, nevertheless, be apprehensive, that they should not be able to withstand the competition of a people who were equally rich, industrious, active, and frugal. The Armenians acted then as they have ever done since: they went to India, where they bought cotton, which they sent to the spinners; the cloths were manufactured under their own inspection, and carried to Gombroon, from whence they were transported to Isfahan. From thence were conveyed into the different provinces of the empire, the dominions of the grand signior, and into Europe, where the custom has prevailed of calling them Persian manufactures, though they were never made but on the coast of Coromandel. Such is the influence of names upon opinions, that the vulgar error, which attributes to Persia the manufacture of India, will, in a series of ages, perhaps, pass with the learned in future times for an incontestible truth. The insurmountable difficulties which errors of this kind have occasioned in the history of Pliny, and other ancient writers, should induce us to set a high value on the labours of the literati of this age, who collect the works of nature and of art, with a view of transmitting them to posterity.

In exchange for the merchandize they carried to Persia, they gave the following articles, which were either

the produce of their own soil, or the fruits of their industry.

Silk, which was the principal commodity; and was prepared and used in great quantities.

Caramanian wool, which nearly resembles that of the Vicuna. It was of great use in the manufacture of hats, and of some stuffs. It is a remarkable circumstance in the goats which supply it, that in the month of May the fleece falls off of itself.

Turquoises, which are more or less valuable, according as they were procured from one or other of the three mines that produce them. They were formerly an article of the dress of our ladies.

Gold brocades, which sold at a higher price than any of those which are the produce of the most celebrated manufactures. Some of them were made to be worn on one, and others on both, sides. They were used for window-curtains, screens, and magnificent sophas.

Tapestry, which has since been so well imitated in Europe, and has for a long time been the richest furniture of our rooms.

Morocco leather, which, as other skins, is brought to a degree of perfection that cannot be equalled anywhere else.

Shagreen, goats' hair, rose-water, medicinal-roots, gums for colours, dates, horses, arms, and many other articles, of which some were sold in India, and others carried to Europe.

Although the Dutch had contrived to get all the trade of the East Indies into their hands, they viewed the transactions of Persia with a jealous eye. They thought the privileges enjoyed by their rivals in the road of Bender-Abassi might be compensated by the advantage they had in having a greater quantity of spices, and entered into a competition with them.

THE English, harassed in every mart by a powerful enemy resolutely bent on their destruction, were obliged everywhere to give way. Their fate was hastened by those civil and religious dissensions, which drowned their country in blood, and extinguished all sentiment and know-

ledge. India was totally forgotten, while more important interells were at stake ; and the company, oppressed and discouraged, were reduced to nothing, at the time that the death of Charles I afforded so instructive and dreadful a lesson.

Cromwell, enraged at the favours the Dutch had shewn to the unfortunate family of the Stuarts, and at the asylum they had afforded to the English who had been proscribed ; and piqued that the republic of the United Provinces should pretend to the dominion of the sea ; proud of his success, and sensible of his own strength, and of that of the nation under his command, resolved at the same time to inspire respect for his country, and to avenge himself. He declared war against the Dutch.

Of all the maritime wars which have been recorded in history, none were conducted with more knowledge, or were more famous for the skill of the commanders and the bravery of the sailors ; none have abounded with so many obstinate and bloody engagements. The English gained the superiority, and owed it to the size of their ships, in which particular they have since been imitated by other European nations.

The protector, whose voice was law, did not exert himself as far as he might in favour of India. He contented himself with providing for the security of the English trade, procuring a disavowal of the massacre at Amboyna, and insisting upon an indemnification for the descendents of the unhappy victims who perished in that dreadful transaction. No mention was made in the treaty of the forts taken from the nation by the Dutch in the island of Java, and in several of the Moluccas. It was stipulated, indeed, that the island of Puleron should be returned ; but the trees that furnish the spices were all rooted up before the island was restored to its former masters. As the soil, however, still remained, and that in process of time it might prove an obstacle to the monopoly which Holland meant to establish, it was retaken in 1666 ; and the republic could never be prevailed upon by the entreaties of France to give it up.

Notwithstanding this neglect, as soon as the company had obtained from the protector a renewal of their privileges in 1657, and found themselves firmly supported by



the public authority, they shewed a spirit of resolution which they had lost during their late misfortunes. Their courage increased with their privileges.

The success they had met with in Europe accompanied them into Asia, Arabia, Persia, Indostan, the eastern parts of India, China; and all the markets where the English had formerly traded were opened to them. They were even received with more frankness and less distrust than they had experienced formerly. Their trade was carried on with great activity, and their profits were very considerable; nothing was wanting to complete their success but to gain admittance into Japan, which they attempted. But the Japanese, being informed by the Dutch that the king of England had married a daughter of the king of Portugal, refused to admit the English into their ports.

Notwithstanding this disappointment, the company's affairs were in a very flourishing condition: they flattered themselves with the pleasing hopes of giving a greater extent and security to their trade, when they found their career retarded by a rivalry, which their own success created.

Some traders, fired with the relation of the advantages to be obtained in India, resolved to undertake voyages to that country. Charles II, who, though seated on the throne, was nothing more than a private man of voluptuous and dissolute manners, gave them permission, for a valuable consideration; while, on the other hand, he extorted large sums from the company, to enable him to prosecute those who encroached upon their charter. A competition of this nature would unavoidably degenerate into piracy. The English, thus becoming enemies to each other, carried on their disputes with a spirit of rancour and animosity which lowered them in the opinion of the people of Asia.

The Dutch wished to take advantage of so singular a conjuncture. These republicans had for a long time been absolute masters of the Indian trade. They had seen with regret a part of it taken out of their hands at the conclusion of the civil wars in England. They hoped to recover it by the superiority of their forces, when in 1664 the two nations entered into a war in all parts of the

world; but the hostilities did not continue long enough to answer these sanguine expectations. As the peace prevented them from having recourse to open violence against one another, they resolved to attack the sovereigns of the country, to oblige them to shut their ports against their rival. The foolish and despicable behaviour of the English increased the insolence of the Dutch, who proceeded so far as to drive them ignominiously from Bantam in 1680.

So serious and public an insult roused the spirit of the English company. The desire of re-establishing their character, gratifying their revenge, and maintaining their interests, animated them to the most spirited exertions. They equipped a fleet of twenty-three ships, with eight thousand regular troops on board. They were ready to sail, when their departure was postponed by the king's orders. Charles, whose necessities and licentiousness were unbounded, entertained hopes of receiving an immense sum to induce him to revoke this order. As he could not obtain it from his subjects, he was resolved to receive it from his enemies. He sacrificed the honour and trade of his nation for 2,250,000 livres [93,749*l.*] which were paid him by the Dutch, who were intimidated by these great preparations. The intended expedition never took place.

The company, exhausted by the expences of an armament which had been rendered useless by the venality of the court, sent their vessels to India without the necessary funds to supply the cargoes; but with orders to the factors, if possible, to take them upon credit. The faith they had hitherto observed in their engagements procured them 6,750,000 [281,250*l.*] Nothing can be more extraordinary than the method that was taken to pay them back.

John Child, who from being a director was become the tyrant of the company, is said, unknown to his colleagues, to have sent orders to India, to invent some pretence or other to defraud the lenders of their money. The execution of this iniquitous project was intrusted to his brother John Child, who was governor of Bombay. This avaricious, turbulent, and savage man, immediately proceeded to make several claims upon the governor of Surat,

some more ridiculous than others. These demands being answered as they deserved, he attacked all the vessels belonging to the subjects of the crown of Delhi, and singled out in particular the ships from Surat, as being the richest. He paid no regard to vessels that sailed with passports from that crown, and carried his insolence so far as to seize a fleet laden with provision for the mogul's army. This terrible pillage, which lasted the whole year 1688, occasioned incredible losses throughout all Indostan.

Aurengzebe, who held the reins of the empire with a steady hand, did not lose a moment in revenging so great an outrage. In the beginning of the year 1689, one of his lieutenants landed with twenty thousand men at Bombay, an island of consequence on the coast of Malabar, which a princess of Portugal had brought as her dowry to Charles II, and which that monarch had ceded to the company in 1668. On the enemy's approach, the fort of Magazan was abandoned with such precipitation, that money, provisions, several chests of arms, and fourteen pieces of heavy cannon, were left behind. The Indian general, encouraged by this first advantage, attacked the English in the field, routed them, and obliged them to retire into the principal fortrefs, which he invested, where he hoped soon to make them surrender.

Child, who was as cowardly in time of danger as he had been daring in his piracies, immediately dispatched deputies to the emperor's court to sue for pardon. After many entreaties, and much submission, the English were admitted into the emperor's presence with their hands tied, and their faces towards the ground. Aurengzebe, who was desirous of preserving a connection which he thought would be useful to his subjects, was not inflexible. Having delivered himself in the style of an incensed sovereign, who could, and ought, perhaps, to revenge himself, he yielded •to their entreaties and submission. The removal of the author of the troubles, and an adequate compensation for such of his subjects as had been plundered, was all the justice exacted on this occasion by the supreme will of the most despotic monarch that ever existed. On these moderate terms the English were permitted still to enjoy the privileges they had obtained at different times in the road belonging to the mogul.

Thus ended this unhappy affair, which for several years interrupted the trade of the company, brought on an expence of between nine and ten millions, [on an average about 416,000*l.*] occasioned the loss of five large vessels, and a greater number of small ones; destroyed many thousand excellent sailors, and ended in the ruin of the credit and honour of the nation; two particulars, the value of which is above every consideration, and for which the two Childs ought to have forfeited their lives.

By changing their maxims and their conduct, the company might have flattered themselves with the prospect of being extricated from the abyss into which their own behaviour had plunged them. These hopes were soon dashed by a revolution which did not directly concern them. James II, a tyrannical and fanatic prince, but one who understood maritime affairs and commerce better than any of his contemporaries, was deposed. This event put all Europe in arms. The consequences of these bloody quarrels are well known. Perhaps it is not a matter of such universal notoriety that the French privateers took four thousand two hundred English merchantmen, valued at six hundred seventy five millions of livres [28,125,000*l.*] and that the greatest part of the vessels returning from India were included in this fatal list.

These depredations were succeeded by a commercial arrangement, which must naturally hasten the ruin of the company. The French refugees had carried the culture of flax and hemp into Ireland and Scotland. For the encouragement of this branch of industry, it was thought proper to prohibit the wear of Indian linens, except muslins, and those which were necessary for the African trade. Was it possible that a body, already exhausted, should sustain so unforeseen, so heavy a stroke?

The peace, which should have put an end to these misfortunes, filled up the measure of them. A general clamour was raised in the three kingdoms against the company. It was not their decline that raised them enemies; it only encouraged those they had already. They had met with opposition at their first establishment. Ever since the year 1615, several politicians had declaimed against the trade to the East Indies. They asserted, that it weakened the naval strength, by destroying great numbers of

men; and lessening the Levant and Russian commerce, without affording an equivalent advantage. These clamours, though contradicted by judicious people, grew so violent towards the year 1628, that the company, seeing themselves exposed to the odium of the nation, applied to government. They petitioned, that the nature of their commerce might be examined: that it might be prohibited, if it were contrary to the interests of the state; and, if favourable to them, that it might be authorised by a public declaration. The opposition of the nation, which had lain some time dormant, was renewed with more fury than ever, at the period we are speaking of. Those who were less severe in their speculations, consented to a trade with India; but maintained, that it should be laid open to the whole nation. An exclusive charter was, in their opinion, a manifest encroachment upon liberty. According to them, government was established by the people, with a view of advancing the general good; and it would be a crime against it, to sacrifice public to private interests, by tolerating odious monopolies. They supported this useful and incontestible principle, by appealing to a recent instance. They urged, that, during the rebellion, the private merchants, who had got possession of the Asiatic seas, carried double the quantity of national goods that were formerly brought, and were enabled to sell commodities, on their return, at so low a price, as to supplant the Dutch in all European markets. But those acute republicans, who were certain of their ruin, if the English should continue any longer to conduct their affairs on the principles of universal liberty, bribed some persons to prevail with Cromwell to form a separate company. These secret practices were countenanced by the English merchants concerned in that trade, who hoped for greater advantages in future; when, being the only venders, they might impose what terms they pleased upon the consumers. The protector, deceived by the artful insinuations of both, renewed the charter, but for seven years only, that he might alter his conduct, if he found reason to think he had taken a wrong step.

This step did not appear improper to every one. Several people were of opinion, that the trade to India could not be carried on with advantage, without an exclusive

privilege ; but many of them maintained that the present charter was insufficient, because it had been granted by kings, who had no right to grant it. They recited many acts of this kind, which were abrogated by parliament, in the reigns of Edward III, Henry IV, James I, and other princes. Charles II, indeed, obtained a verdict of this nature in the court of common pleas, but it was founded upon a frivolous pretence. This tribunal had the confidence to declare, “ that the prince had authority to prevent his subjects from holding commerce with infidels, lest the purity of their faith should be contaminated.”

Though the parties above mentioned were actuated by private, and even opposite views, they all united in the plan of making the trade free, or, at least, of procuring the reversal of the company's charter. The nation, in general, were on their side : but the body that was attacked, defended itself by its partisans, the ministry, and all the dependents of the court, who made this a common cause. Each party had recourse to libels, intrigue, and corruption. These contending passions produced one of those storms, the violence of which can hardly be felt anywhere but in England. The several factions, sects, and interests, maintained a furious combat ; in which they all mingled, without distinction of rank, age, or sex. Such a spirit of enthusiasm had never been raised by the greatest events. To keep up the zeal of their friends, the company offered to lend large sums, on condition of obtaining their charter. Their adversaries made offers still more considerable, to get it revoked.

The two houses of parliament, before whom this cause was heard, declared in favour of the private merchants. They obtained leave to carry on trade to India, either separately, or in concert. They entered into an association, and formed a new company. The old one had permission to continue its voyages till the expiration of their charter, which was very near at hand. Thus England had two East India companies at the same time, authorised by parliament, instead of one, established by royal authority.

These two bodies shewed as much zeal for the destruction of each other, as they had shewn for their respective establishment. They had both experienced the advanta-

ges of trade, and viewed each other with all the jealousy and hatred which ambition and avarice never fail to inspire. Their dissensions soon broke out with considerable violence in Europe, but chiefly in India. At last, the two societies made advances towards a reconciliation, and united their funds in 1702. From this period, the affairs of the company were carried on with great propriety, prudence, and dignity. The principles of commerce, which were every day better understood in England, had a good effect on their administration, as far as the interests of their monopoly could allow. They made improvements in their former settlements, and formed new ones. They endeavoured to indemnify themselves for the profits they were deprived of by a strong competition, by procuring a larger sale for their commodities. Their charter was less violently attacked since it had received the sanction of the laws, and obtained the protection of parliament.

Their prosperity was interrupted by some transient misfortunes. In 1702, the English had formed a settlement in the island of Pulocondor, which was dependent on Cochin-China. Their design was to take a share in the commerce of this rich kingdom, which, till then, had been too much neglected. An instance of excessive severity had given disgust to sixteen soldiers of Macassar, who were part of the garrison. On the 3d of March 1705, they set fire, in the night, to the houses belonging to the fort, and massacred the Europeans as they came out to extinguish it. Thirty out of forty-five lost their lives in this manner; the rest were massacred by the natives, who were exasperated at the insolence of these strangers. By this accident the company lost the money their enterprise had cost them, together with the stock of their factories, and the prospects they had entertained.

• Several of their factories were threatened with other storms, which had been collected by the turbulent spirit and avarice of their agents. A more moderate system of politics made them forego some odious claims, and tranquillity was soon restored. It was not long before objects of more important concern engaged their attention.

*War between  
the English and  
French.*

ENGLAND and France entered into a war in 1744. The whole world became the scene of their divisions. In India, as well as in other places, each nation sustained its character. The English, ever animated with the spirit of commerce, attacked and ruined that of their enemies. The French, adhering to their passion for conquest, seized upon the principal settlement belonging to their rival. The event shewed which of the two nations had acted with the greatest prudence. That which attended only to its own aggrandizement, sank into a total inactivity; while the other, though deprived of the centre of its power, carried its enterprizes to a greater extent.

A cessation of hostilities between the two divided nations had no sooner taken place, than they engaged themselves as auxiliaries in the quarrels of the Indian princes. Soon after, they again took arms on their own account. Before the end of this war, the French were driven out of the continent and seas of Asia. At the conclusion of the peace in 1763, the English company found themselves in possession of the power in Arabia, in the Persian gulf, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and at Bengal.

All these countries differ from each other in the climate, the manners, the soil, the productions, the spirit of industry, and the mode of selling and purchasing. They ought to be accurately and thoroughly known. We will give a short sketch of them. This description will be found to have a particular connection with the history of a nation which has obtained a remarkable influence in those countries, and derives from thence the greatest advantages.

*Description of  
Arabia, &c.*

ARABIA is one of the largest peninsulas in the known world. It is bounded on the south by the Indian ocean; by the gulf of Persia on the east; and on the west by the Red sea, which separates it from Africa: on the north, a line drawn at the extremity of the two gulfs, probably marked out its boundary in ancient times. Irac-Arabi, the desert of Syria, and Palestine, seem at present to make a part of it.



The peninsula is divided, from north to south, by a chain of mountains, less barren, and more temperate, than the rest of the country. The rain falls upon most of them for two or three months, at least, in the year, but at different seasons, according to their exposition. The waters that descend from them are lost among the sands in the valleys, or pour down in torrents into the sea, in proportion to the slope and distances. In one season, the heat is so violent, that no person travels, and that even the slaves do not appear in the streets, without an urgent necessity. Every kind of labour is then suspended in the middle of the day. The greatest part of the time is passed in sleeping in subterraneous caverns, the air of which is renewed only by a tube.

This country is usually divided into three parts ; Arabia Petræa, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix ; names which denote the nature of the soil in each of these countries.

Arabia Petræa is the most western, and the smallest of the three. It is, for the most part, uncultivated, and almost totally covered with rocks. In Arabia Deserta, nothing is to be seen but dry plains, heaps of sand raised and dissipated by the wind, and steep mountains, never embellished with verdure. Springs are so rarely found there, that the possession of them is always disputed with the sword. Arabia Felix owes its specious appellation less to its fertility, than to its vicinity to the barren countries that surround it. These different regions enjoy a sky constantly pure and serene.

All histories agree, that this country was peopled at a most early period of antiquity. Its first inhabitants came probably from Syria and Chaldea. It is not known at what period they began to be civilized ; whether their knowledge was derived from India, or whether they acquired it themselves. It appears, that their religion was sabbism, even before they were acquainted with the people of Upper Asia. They had conceived sublime ideas of the divinity at an early period : they worshipped the stars as bodies animated by celestial spirits : their religion was neither cruel nor absurd ; and though they were liable to those fallies of enthusiasm so common among the southern nations, they do not seem to have been tainted with fanaticism till the time of Mohammed. The inhabitants of

Arabia Deserta professed a less rational kind of worship. Many of them worshipped, and some offered, human sacrifices to the sun. It is a truth that may be collected from the study of history, and the inspection of the globe, that the religious systems in barren countries, subject to inundations and volcanoes, have ever had a tincture of cruelty, and have always been of a milder cast in countries more favoured by nature. They take their character from the climate where they are formed.

When Mohammed had established a new religion in his country, it was no difficult task to infuse a spirit of zeal into his followers; and this zeal made them conquerors. They extended their dominion from the western seas to those of China, and from the Canaries to the Molucca islands. They also carried along with them the useful arts, which they improved. The Arabians did not equally succeed in the fine arts; they shewed, indeed, some genius for them, but had not the least idea of that taste with which nature some time after inspired the people who became their disciples.

Perhaps genius, which is the offspring of a creative imagination, flourishes in hot countries, which abound with a variety of productions, grand scenes, and surprising events that excite enthusiasm; while taste, which selects and reaps the produce of the fields that genius has sown, seems rather to belong to people of a sedate, mild, and moderate, disposition, who live under the influence of a temperate sky. Perhaps too, this same taste, which is the effect of reason refined and matured by time, requires a degree of stability in the government, united with a certain freedom of thinking, a gradual improvement of knowledge, which, affording a greater scope to genius, enables it to discern more exactly the relation one object has to another, and to combine with happier art those mixed sensations which give the highest entertainment to men of elegant minds. Accordingly, the Arabians, who were almost constantly forced into regions disturbed with war and fanaticism, never enjoyed that temperature of government and climate which gives birth to taste. But they introduced into the countries they conquered, sciences which they had pillaged, as it were, in the course of their ravages, and all the arts essential to the prosperity of nations.

No nation at that time understood commerce so well, or carried it to a greater extent. They attended to it even in the course of their conquests. Their merchants, manufactures, and staples, extended from Spain to Tonquin; and other people, at least these in the western part of the world, were indebted to them for arts and sciences, and all articles conducive to the convenience, the preservation, and the pleasures, of life.

When the power of the caliphs began to decline, the Arabians, after the example of several nations they had subdued, threw off the yoke of these princes, and the country re-assumed by degrees its ancient form of government, as well as its primitive manners. At this era, the nation being, as formerly, divided into tribes, under the conduct of different chiefs, returned to their original character, from which fanaticism and ambition had made them depart.

The stature of the Arabians is low, their bodies lean, and their voice slender; but they have robust constitutions, brown hair, a swarthy complexion, black sparkling eyes, a witty, but seldom an agreeable, countenance. This contrasted mixture of feature and qualities, which seem incompatible, appear to have been united in this race of men, to constitute a singular nation, whose figure and character partake strongly of that of the Turks, Africans, and Persians, by whom they are surrounded. Grave and serious, they consider their long beards as marks of dignity; they speak little, use no gesture, make no pauses, nor interrupt one another in their conversation. They pique themselves on observing the strictest probity towards each other, which is the effect of that self-love, and that spirit of patriotism, which, united together, make any nation, clan, or society, esteem and prefer themselves to the rest of the world. The more carefully they preserve their phlegmatic character, so much the more formidable is their resentment when once it is raised. These people have abilities, and even a genius for the sciences; yet they cultivate them but little, either from want of assistance, or because they have no occasion for them: choosing rather, no doubt, to suffer natural evils, than the inconvenience of labour. The Arabians of our days display no monu-

ment of genius, no productions of industry, which entitle them to hold any rank in the history of the human mind.

Their ruling passion is jealousy; that torment of impetuous, weak, and indolent, minds. It might naturally be asked, whether this distrust were owing to the high or contemptible opinion they entertained of themselves? It is said to be from the Arabians that several nations of Asia, Africa, and even Europe itself, have borrowed those despicable precautions this odious passion prescribes against a sex, which ought to be the guardian, not the slave, of our pleasures. As soon as a daughter is born, they unite, by a kind of future, those parts which nature has separated, leaving just space enough for the natural discharges. As the child grows, the parts by degrees adhere so closely, that when they become marriageable they are obliged to be separated by an incision. Sometimes it is thought sufficient to make use of a ring. The married, as well as the unmarried women, are subjected to this outrage on the virtue of the sex; with this difference only, that the ring worn by the young women cannot be taken off, whereas that of the married women has a kind of padlock, of which the husband keeps the key. This custom, which is known in all parts of Arabia, is almost universally adopted in that part which bears the name of *Petræa*.

Such are the manners of the nation in general. The different mode of living among the people who compose it, must necessarily have introduced some peculiarities of character that are worth observing.

The number of Arabians who inhabit the desert may amount to two millions. They are distributed into several clans, some of which are more populous and considerable than others, but all independent of each other. Their government is simple: an hereditary chief, assisted by a few old men, determines all debates, and punishes the offenders. If he be hospitable, humane, and just, they adore him: if haughty, cruel, and avaricious, they assassinate him, and appoint a successor out of his own family.

These people encamp at all seasons of the year. They have no settled abode, and fix at different places where they can be supplied with water, fruits, and pasture. They find an infinite charm in this wandering life, and consider the sedentary Arabs in the light of slaves. They

live upon the milk and flesh of their herds. Their clothes, tents, cordage, and the carpets they sleep upon, are all made of the wool of their sheep, and the hair of their goats and camels. This is the employment of the women in each family ; and there is not a single artist in the whole desert. What they consume in tobacco, coffee, rice, and dates, is purchased with the butter they carry to the frontiers, and by the money arising from the annual sale of more than twenty thousand camels. These animals, so useful in the East, were formerly carried to Syria. Most of them are now sent to Persia, the perpetual wars there having occasioned an extraordinary demand for them, and diminished their species.

These articles not being sufficient to supply the Arabs with what they want, they have contrived to raise a contribution on the caravans, which superstition leads to travel through their sandy regions. The most numerous of these, which goes from Damascus to Mecca, procures a safe passage by a tribute of a hundred purses, or a hundred and fifty thousand livres [6,250*l.*] to which the grand signior is subjected, and which, by ancient agreement, is distributed among all the hordes. The other caravans make similar terms with the hordes through whose territories they were obliged to pass.

Independent of this resource, the Arabs inhabiting the most northern part of the desert have had recourse to plunder. These people, so humane, faithful, and disinterested towards each other, are savage and rapacious in their transactions with foreigners. While they preserve in their tents the character of beneficent and generous hosts, they commit continual depredations in the towns and villages of their neighbourhood. They are good fathers, good husbands, and good masters ; but all are enemies who do not belong to their family. They frequently carry their incursions to a great distance ; and Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, are not uncommonly the scenes of their depredations.

The Arabs, who devote themselves to plunder, form a sort of society with the camels, to carry on trade or war, where the man is to have all the profit, and the animal the principal fatigue. As these two beings are to live together, they are brought up with a view to each other.

The Arab trains his camel from its birth to all the exercises and hardships it is to undergo during the whole course of its life. He accustoms it to labour hard, and to eat little. The animal is early inured to pass its days without drinking, and its nights without sleep. He teaches it to draw up its legs under its belly, while it suffers itself to be laden with burdens that are insensibly increased as its strength is improved by age, and by the habit of bearing fatigue. In this singular plan of education, which princes sometimes adopt the more easily to tame their subjects, in proportion as the labour of the animal is doubled, its subsistence is diminished. The Arabians qualify the camels for expedition, by matches, in which the horse runs against him. The camel, less active and nimble, tires out his rival in a long course. When the master and the camel are ready and equipped for plunder, the set out together, traverse the sandy deserts, and lie in ambush upon the confines to rob the merchant or traveller. The man ravages, massacres, and seizes the prey; and the camel carries the booty. If these adventurers are pursued, they make a precipitate retreat. The master robber mounts his favourite camel, drives the whole troop before him, travels three hundred leagues in eight days without unloading his camels, or allowing them more than an hour each day for rest, or a cake of dough for their subsistence. They sometimes remain the whole time without drinking, unless they happen to smell out a spring at a little distance from the road, when they redouble their pace, run to the water with eagerness, which makes them take at one draught as much as is sufficient to quench their present thirst, and serve them to the end of their journey. Such is the animal so often celebrated in the bible, the coran, and the eastern romances.

The Arabs who live in districts that afford some slender pasture, and where the soil is proper for barley, breed the finest horses in the world. These horses are sent into all parts to improve and multiply the breed of these animals, which are everywhere inferior in swiftness, beauty, and sagacity, to those of Arabia. Their owners live with them as with domestics, on whose service and affection they can rely: and it happens with them as with all other wandering people, those in particular, who treat animals with kind-

ness, that both the men and the animals partake, in some measure, of each other's manners and disposition. These Arabs are simple, mild, and docile : and the different religions that have prevailed in these countries, and the several governments, of which they have been the subjects or tributaries, have produced very little alteration in the character they derive from climate or from habit.

The Arabs settled near the Indian and the Red sea, and those who inhabit Arabia Felix, were formerly a mild people, fond of liberty, and content with a state of independence, without dreaming of conquest. They were too much prejudiced in favour of the beauty of their sky, and of the soil that supplied their wants almost without culture, to be tempted to extend their dominion over different countries lying in another climate. Mohammed changed their ideas : but they retain no traces of the impressions he communicated to them. They pass their time in smoking, taking coffee, opium, and sherbet ; or in burning exquisite perfumes, the smoke of which they receive in their clothes, which are slightly sprinkled with rose-water. These gratifications are often preceded or followed by singing gallant or amorous verses.

Their compositions both in point of expression and sentiment, have a degree of grace, softness, and refinement, far beyond any thing we find amongst any other people, ancient or modern. The language they speak in this world to their mistresses, seems as if it were the same as that which they will speak to their houris in the other. It is a kind of music so moving and so fine ; a murmur so soft, comparisons so agreeable and blooming, that one would almost say, their poetry was perfumed as their climate. The imitations of nature in the Arabian poems, are of the same kind as the expressions of honour among our ancient knights. The latter is the quintessence of virtue, the former of voluptuousness. They are described as exhausted by the ardour of their passion and of the climate, and having scarce the power to breathe. They give themselves up, without reserve, to this delicious languor, which, perhaps, they would not experience under any other sky.

Before the Portuguese had intercepted the navigation of the Red sea, the Arabs had more activity. They were

the factors of all the trade that passed through this channel. Aden which is situated at the most southern extremity of Arabia upon the Indian ocean, was the staple of this trade. The situation of its harbour, which opened an easy communication with Egypt, Ethiopia, India, and Persia, had rendered it, for many ages, one of the most flourishing factories in Asia. Fifteen years after it had repulsed the great Albuquerque, who attempted to demolish it, in 1513, it submitted to the Turks, who did not long remain masters of it. The king of Yemen, who possessed the only district in Arabia that merits the title of happy, drove them from thence, and removed the trade to Mocha, a place in his dominions, which till then was only a village.

This trade was at first inconsiderable ; consisting principally in myrrh, incense, aloes, balm of Mecca, some aromatics, and medicinal drugs. These articles, the exportation of which is continually retarded by exorbitant imposts, and does not exceed at present seven or eight hundred thousand livres [on an average 30,000*l.*] were at that time more in repute than they have been since ; but must have been always of little consequence. Soon after a great change ensued from the introduction of coffee.

The coffee tree is originally a native of Upper Ethiopia, where it has been known time immemorial, and is still cultivated with success. M. Lagrenée de Mezieres, one of the most intelligent agents that France ever had in the India service, had some of the fruit in his possession, and has often made use of it. He found it to be larger, rather longer, not so green, and almost as fragrant, as that which was first gathered in Arabia towards the close of the fifteenth century.

It is commonly believed, that a mollach, named Chadelly, was the first among the Arabs who made use of coffee, to relieve himself from a continual drowsiness which hindered him from attending punctually to his nocturnal devotions. His dervises did the same : and their example was followed by the lawyers. It was soon found out, that this liquor purified the blood by a gentle agitation, dissipated the crudities of the stomach, and raised the spirits ; and it was adopted even by those who had no occasion to keep themselves awake. It passed from the



borders of the Red sea to Medina and Mecca, and was introduced by the pilgrims into all the Mohammedan countries.

In these countries, where there is less freedom of manners than in ours, where the jealousy of the men, and the close confinement of the women, make society less lively, it was thought proper to encourage public coffee-houses. Those in Persia soon became infamous, where young Georgian women, dressed like courtezans, acted obscene plays, and prostituted themselves for hire. When these offensive irregularities were suppressed by order of the court, these houses became places of decent resort for the indolent, and of relaxation for men of business. The politicians entertained themselves with news, the poets recited their verses, and the mollachs delivered their sermons there, which were usually rewarded with some charitable donations.

Affairs were not in the same peaceable state at Constantinople. The coffee-houses were no sooner opened than they were frequented to excess. People spent their whole time in them. The grand musti, exasperated to see the mosques abandoned, pronounced that the infusion of this plant was included in that law of Mohammed, which forbade the use of strong liquors. Government, which frequently aids the superstition of which it is sometimes the dupe, gave immediate orders that the houses which had given such offence to the priests, should be shut up; and enjoined the officers of police to put a stop to the use of this liquor in private families. The strong inclination they had for it still prevailed over all these severe regulations. Coffee continued to be drunk, and even the places where it was to be had, soon grew more numerous than ever.

Upon this occasion I should be much inclined to say to sovereigns; if you are desirous that your laws should be observed, take care that they never should be made in opposition to nature. I should say to priests; let not your morality proscribe innocent pleasures. You may both of you threaten and thunder as much as you will; you may shew us your dungeons open, or hell under our feet: but you will never stifle in me the desire of being

happy. I will be happy is the first article of a code, anterior to every system of legislation or morality

In the middle of the last century, Kuprioli, the grand vizier, went in disguise to the principal coffee-houses in Constantinople. He there found a number of malcontents, who, thinking the affairs of government were in reality the concern of every private person, spoke of them with warmth, and arraigned with great boldness the conduct of the generals and ministers. He then visited the taverns, where wine was sold. They were full of plain people, chiefly soldiers, who accustomed to consider the interests of the state as those of the prince, for whom they entertained a silent veneration, sang lively songs, talked of their amours and warlike exploits. These last societies, which are attended with no inconveniencies, he thought ought to be tolerated: but the first he considered as dangerous under an absolute government. He had not sufficiently considered this matter, to convince himself, that they were not more calculated to raise apprehensions than the others. Even in a despotic state, the people who are oppressed must be left at liberty to complain, for it is a relief to them. That sort of discontent which evaporates itself is not the one to be feared. Rebellions arise from that spirit of dissatisfaction, which, being concealed, is worked up by internal fermentation, and breaks out in the most speedy and terrible effects. Woe to those sovereigns whose oppressions are continually increasing till the murmurs of the people cease.

However this may be, the regulation which was confined to the capital of the empire, has not discouraged the use of coffee, and has, perhaps, increased the consumption of it. It is publicly offered to sale in all the streets and markets ready made, and is drunk in every family at least twice a-day. In some, it is always ready, it being the custom to offer it to all visitors, and reckoned equally unpolite not to offer it, or to refuse it.

At the same time that coffee-houses were shut in Constantinople, they were opened in London. This novelty was introduced there in 1652 by a merchant of the name of Edward, on his return from the Levant. The English grew fond of it; and it has since been introduced among

all the nations of Europe ; but the custom is pursued with more moderation than in those climates where religion prohibits the use of wine.

The tree that produces the coffee grows in the territory of Betelsagui, a town belonging to Yemen, situated upon a dry sand at the distance of ten leagues from the Red sea. It is cultivated in a district fifty leagues long, and fifteen or twenty broad : the fruit is not everywhere in equal perfection. That which grows upon the higher grounds, particularly at Ouden, is smaller, greener, weighs heavier, and is generally preferred.

It is computed that Arabia contains twelve millions of inhabitants, among the greatest part of whom coffee is a highly favoured liquor. None but the rich citizens have the pleasure of tasting the berry itself. The common people are obliged to content themselves with the shell and the husk of this valuable production. These remains, so much despised, make a liquor of a pretty clear colour, which has the taste of coffee without its bitterness and strength. These articles may be had at a low price at Betelsagui, which is the general market for them. Here likewise is sold all the coffee which comes out of the country by land. The rest is carried to Mocha, which is thirty-five leagues distant, or to the nearer ports of Lohia or Hodeida, from whence it is transported in small vessels to Jodda. The Egyptians fetch it from the last-mentioned place, and all other nations from the former.

The quantity of coffee exported may be estimated from twelve to thirteen millions weight. The European companies take off a million and a half ; the Persians three millions and a half ; the fleet from Suez six millions and a half ; Indostan, the Maldives, and the Arabian colonies on the coast of Africa, fifty thousand ; and the land caravans a million.

As the coffee which is bought up by the caravans and the Europeans is the best that can be procured, it costs from sixteen to seventeen sols [about  $8\frac{1}{2}$ d.] a pound. The Persians, who content themselves with that of an inferior quality, pay no more than twelve or thirteen sols [about  $6\frac{1}{2}$ d.] a pound. The Egyptians purchase it at the rate of fifteen or sixteen [about 8d.] ; their cargoes being composed partly of good, and partly of bad coffee

If we estimate coffee at fourteen sols [about 7d.] a pound, which is the mean price, the profits accruing to Arabia from its annual exportation, will amount to eight or nine millions of livres [from upwards of 300,000l. to 375,000l.] This money does not go into their coffers ; but it enables them to purchase the commodities brought from the foreign markets to their ports of Jodda and Mocha.

Mocha receives from Abyssinia, sheep, elephants' teeth, musk, and slaves. It is supplied from the eastern coast of Africa with gold, slaves, amber, and ivory ; from the Persian gulf, with dates, tobacco, and corn ; from Surat, with a vast quantity of coarse, and a few fine linens ; from Bombay and Pondicherry, with iron, lead, copper, which are carried thither from Europe ; from Malabar, with rice, ginger, pepper, Indian saffron, with caire, timber, and cardamom ; from the Maldives, with gum benzoin, aloeswood, and pepper, which these islands take in exchange ; from Coromandel, with four or five hundred bales of cottons, chiefly blue. The greatest part of these commodities, which may fetch six millions [250,000l.] are consumed in the interior part of the country. The rest, particularly the cottons, are disposed of in Abyssinia, Socotra, and the eastern coast of Africa.

None of the branches of business which are managed at Mocha, as well as throughout all the country of Yemen, or even at Sanaa, the capital, are in the hands of the natives. The extortions with which they are perpetually threatened by the government, deter them from interfering in them. All the warehouses are occupied by the Banians of Surat or Guzarat, who make a point of returning to their own country as soon as they have made their fortunes. They then resign their settlements to merchants of their own nation, who retire in their turn, and are succeeded by others.

There is no country where the price of every thing is not known, except that of man. The most civilized nations have not yet acquired that knowledge. Witness that multitude of capital punishments inflicted in all parts for offences, even of a trivial kind. It is not probable, that those nations which condemn to death a young woman of eighteen years of age, who might be the mother of five or six children, or a healthy and vigorous young

man of thirty, for having stolen a little piece of silver, should have sufficiently meditated upon those tables of the probabilities of human life which they have so learnedly calculated ; since they seem to be ignorant how many individuals are sacrificed by nature, before the life of one is prolonged to that period. Thus, without being conscious of it, we repair a little injury done to society, by a greater. By the severity of the punishment, we drive the culprit on from theft to assassination. What ! is the hand, then, that has burst open the lock of your coffers, or that has even plunged a poniard into the breast of a citizen, fit for nothing but to be cut off ? Because a dishonest or an indigent debtor cannot discharge his debts, is he to be rendered totally useless to society, and reduced to the impossibility of being ever able to pay you, by being confined in a prison ? Would it not be better for the public interest, and for yours, that he should make some use of his industry and his talents, provided you be empowered by the action you have legally brought against him, to follow him everywhere, and to seize such a portion of his profit as shall be adjudged to you by some wise regulation ? But he will quit the country ? Of what consequence is it to you, whether he be in England, or in prison ? Will you not be equally a loser of your money ? If there were mutual compacts settled between the nations, the delinquent would not find an asylum any where. If you enlarge your views a little, you will conceive, that the debtor who escapes from you by flight, cannot possibly make his fortune in a foreign country, without paying a part of his debts, from the necessaries he is obliged to supply himself with, and from the reciprocal exchanges subsisting between nations. It is with the wines of France, that he will intoxicate himself at London ; or with the silks of Lyons, that his wife will be clothed at Cadiz or Lisbon. But these speculations are too abstract and patriotic for a cruel creditor, who, tormented with the spirit of avarice and resentment, would rather keep his unfortunate debtor in chains, lying upon straw, and feed him there with bread and water, than restore him to his liberty. But these views ought not to have escaped the notice of governments and of legislators ; and it is they who are to be censured for all the barbarous absurdities

still subsisting upon this matter in our nations that pretend to be civilized.

The European companies who enjoy the exclusive privilege of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope, formerly maintained agents at Mocha. Notwithstanding it was stipulated by a solemn capitulation, that the imposts demanded should be rated at two and a quarter per cent. they were subject to frequent extortions; the governor of the place insisting on their making him presents, which enabled him to purchase the favour of the courtiers, or even of the prince himself. However, the profits they obtained by the sale of European goods, particularly cloths, made them submit to these repeated humiliations. When these several articles were furnished by Grand Caffo; it was then impossible to withstand the competition, and the fixed settlements were therefore given up.

The trade was carried on by ships, that sailed from Europe with iron, lead, copper, and silver, sufficient to pay for the coffee they intended to buy. The supercargoes, who had the care of these transactions, settled the accounts every time they returned. These voyages, at first rather numerous and advantageous, have been successively laid aside. The plantations of coffee made by the European nations in their colonies have equally lessened the consumption and the price of that which comes from Arabia. In process of time, these voyages did not yield a sufficient profit to answer the high charges of undertaking them on purpose. The companies of England and France then resolved, one of them to send ships from Bombay, and the other from Pondicherry to Mocha, with the merchandize of Europe and India. They even frequently had recourse to a method that was less expensive. The English and French who traffic from one part of India to another, visit the Red sea every year. Though they dispose of their merchandize there to good advantage, they can never take in cargoes from thence for their return. They carry, for a moderate freight, the coffee belonging to the companies who lade the vessels with it, which they dispatch from Malabar and Coromandel to Europe. The Dutch company, who prohibit their servants from sitting out ships, and who send no vessels themselves to the gulf of Arabia, are deprived of the share they might take in

this branch of commerce. They have also given up a much more lucrative branch, that of Jodda.

Jodda is a port situated near the middle of the gulf of Arabia, twenty leagues from Mecca. It is a safe harbour, but the access to it is difficult. The purposes of trade have brought nine or ten thousand inhabitants there, who most of them dwell in huts, and who are all condemned to breathe an infected air, and to drink brackish water. The government is of a mixed kind: the xeriff of Mecca, and the grand signior, who keeps a feeble and useless garrison there, share the authority and the revenue of the customs between them. These imposts are levied upon the Europeans at the rate of eight per cent. and upon other nations at thirteen. They are always paid in merchandize, which the managers oblige the merchants of the country to buy at a very dear rate. The Turks, who have been driven from Aden, Mocha, and every part of the Yemen, would long ago have been expelled from Jodda, if there had not been reason to apprehend that they might revenge themselves in such a manner as to put an end to their pilgrimages and commerce.

Surat sends three ships every year to Jodda, which are laden with linens of all colours, shawls, cotton and silk stuffs, frequently ornamented with gold and silver flowers. The sale of these goods produces nine or ten millions of livres [from 375,000*l.* to 416,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] Bengal dispatches two, and more frequently three, ships for the same destination, and their cargoes, which belong to the English, may be one third less in value than those of Surat. They consist of rice, ginger, saffron, sugar, a few silks, and a considerable quantity of linens, which are for the most part ordinary. These vessels, which may enter the Red sea from the beginning of December till the end of May, find the fleet of Suez at Jodda.

This city, which is supposed to be built upon the ruins of the ancient Arsinoe, is situated at the extremity of the Red sea, and at the distance only of two or three days journey from Grand Cairo. Its inhabitants are partly Egyptians, and partly Arabs. They are so little fond of living in the place, which is unwholesome, and unprovided with drinkable water, that those among them who enjoy

an easy fortune, or can meet with employment anywhere else, are never there but at the times of the setting out and return of the ships, both which events are regulated by periodical and invariable winds. Twenty vessels, resembling in shape those of the Dutch, but ill built, badly fitted out, and improperly commanded, are dispatched every year to Jodda. Their cargo consists chiefly of provisions, but with this difference, that the five belonging to the grand signior deliver theirs gratuitously at Medina and Mecca, while the others commonly sell their cargoes at a very advantageous price. They carry also Venetian glass, coral, and yellow amber, of which the Indians make necklaces and bracelets.

In exchange for their provisions, their merchandize, and especially their gold, they receive six or seven millions weight of coffee; and in linens, stuffs, and spices, to the value of seven or eight millions of livres [from 291,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to 333,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] Such is the ignorance and laziness of these navigators, that the whole of these rich articles never reaches the place of their destination. A considerable part of them is habitually swallowed up by the waves, notwithstanding the care that is taken always to cast anchor at the beginning of the night.

The trade of the Red sea would become more extensive, and less exposed to risks, if a revolution which it has lately experienced should be attended with the consequences that seem to be expected from it.

By a treaty concluded on the 7th May 1775, between the first of the beys and Mr. Hastings the British governor of Bengal, the English settled in India are allowed to introduce and circulate, in the interior part of Egypt, all the merchandize they choose, on paying six and a half per cent. for those goods that come from the Ganges and Madras, and eight per cent. for those which have been laden at Bombay and Surat. This convention has already been carried into execution, and the success has answered beyond expectation. If the Ottoman court and the Arabs do not interrupt this new communication; if the port of Suez, now almost choked up with the sands, were repaired; if the seditions which are incessantly disturbing the banks of the Nile could at length be put a stop to;



we might perhaps see the intercourse between Europe and Asia carried on wholly, or in part, through the ancient channel.

The merchandize brought from Surat and Bengal, which the Egyptian fleet does not take off, is partly consumed in the country, and bought in great quantities by the caravans, which go every year to Mecca.

The Arabs had ever entertained an affection for this city. They supposed it to have been the residence of Abraham; and they flocked from all parts to a temple, of which they believed he was the founder. Mohammed, who was a man of too much understanding to attempt to abolish a devotion so generally established, contented himself with rectifying the object of it. He banished the idols from this revered place, and dedicated it to the unity of God. Mohammed was not the messenger of heaven; but he was an acute politician, and a great conqueror. To promote the concourse of strangers to a city which he intended to make the capital of his empire, he commanded that all who embraced his law should once in their lives undertake a pilgrimage thither, on pain of dying reprobates. This precept was accompanied with another, which makes it evident that he was not guided by superstition alone. He ordered that every pilgrim, of whatever country he was, should purchase five pieces of cotton, and get them consecrated, and made into handkerchiefs for himself, and for all the persons belonging to his family who might be prevented by reasonable impediments from undertaking this holy expedition.

This policy might naturally be expected to make Arabia the centre of a prodigious trade, when the number of pilgrims should amount to several millions. This zeal is so much abated, especially on the coast of Africa, in Indostan and Persia, in proportion to the respective distances of those places from Mecca, that the number is reduced to a hundred and fifty thousand, the majority of whom are Turks. They carry away with them seven hundred and fifty thousand pieces of linen, each ten ells in length, exclusive of those which many of them buy for sale. They are encouraged in these mercantile schemes by the advantages they have in crossing the deserts, and in not being exposed to those oppressive tolls which are so de-

fructuive in the sea-ports of Suez and Bassora. The money received from these pilgrims and from the fleet, as well as that which the Arabs get from the sale of their coffee, is expended in India. The vessels from Surat, Malabar, Coromandel, and Bengal, annually carry away to the amount of fourteen or fifteen millions of livres [from 583,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* to 625,000*l.*] and about the eighth part of this sum in merchandize. When these riches are divided among the trading nations of Europe, the English contrive to appropriate to themselves the most considerable share of them. They have acquired the same superiority in Persia.

The English nation had scarce been admitted into the empire of the Sophis, when, as we have observed, the Dutch resorted there in great numbers. The trade of these republicans was at first established on a very disadvantageous footing; but being, by the civil wars of England, soon delivered from a rival, whose various privileges were not to be overbalanced even by the greatest economy, they were in a short time without competitors, and consequently acquired an authority to set what price they thought proper on the commodities they bought or sold. The connections of the Persians with the Dutch were formed on this destructive system; when the return of the English who were soon after followed by the French, gave a new turn to affairs, and put them upon a more equitable footing.

At the time when the three nations exerted their utmost efforts to gain the superiority, and these efforts turned to the advantage of the empire, they were harassed with a thousand oppressions, some more unjust and odious than others. The throne was continually filled with tyrannical or weak princes, whose cruelty and injustice weakened the correspondence of their subjects with other nations. One of these tyrants was so savage, that a great man of his court used to say, "that whenever he came out of the king's closet, he clapped both his hands to his head, to feel whether it were still upon his shoulders." When the successor of this tyrant was told that the finest provinces in the empire were invaded by the Turks, he answered coolly, "that their progress gave him very little disturbance, provided they would leave him

“ the city of Ispahan.” The son of the latter was so meanly enslaved to the most frivolous observances of his religion, that he was styled, by way of derision, “ Husein the monk, or priest :” a character less odious, perhaps, in a prince, but much more dangerous to his people, than that of impiety, or defiance of the gods. Under these despicable sovereigns mercantile affairs declined every day more and more. The Afghans destroyed them entirely.

These are a people of Candahar, a mountainous country, lying north of India. They have sometimes been subject to the moguls, sometimes to the Persians, but are more frequently independent. Those that do not reside in the capital live in tents, after the manner of the Tartars. They are of low stature, and ill made ; but are strong, robust, skilled in the use of the bow, and in horsemanship, and inured to fatigue. Their manner of fighting is singular ; a chosen band of soldiers, divided into two parties, fall upon the enemy without any order, only endeavouring to open the way for the army that follows them. As soon as the battle is begun, they fall back upon the flanks and towards the rear-guard, where their business is to prevent any person from giving way. If any soldier attempts to fly, they attack him with their sabres, and compel him to return to his post.

About the beginning of this century, this fierce people left their mountains, invaded Persia, carried devastation everywhere, and at length subdued it, after a bloody contest of twenty years. Fanaticism still perpetuates, and perhaps even expiates, the memory of the horrid outrages which they committed in the course of their conquest. For such is the nature of religious enthusiasm, that it sanctifies the crime it inspires, and that this crime expiates the others we have been guilty of. The fanatic says to God, it is true, O Lord ! that I have administered poison, that I have murdered, and that I have robbed ; but thou wilt pardon me, for with my own hands I have exterminated fifty of thine enemies. Inflamed with zeal for the superstitions of the Turks, and with implacable hatred against the sect of Ali, the Afghans massacre thousands of Persians in cold blood. In the meantime, the provinces they had not entered were ravaged by the Russians, Turks, and

Tartars. Thamas Kouli Khan drove these robbers out of this country, but shewed himself still more barbarous than they were. His violent death gave rise to new calamities. Anarchy aggravates the cruelties of tyranny. One of the finest empires in the world is become an extensive scene of desolation, and a lasting and shameful monument of that destructive instinct that animates uncivilized people, while at the same time it is an inevitable consequence of the defects of a despotic government.

During this general confusion, Bender-Abassi, and the other bad ports of Persia, were neglected. The little share of trade that still subsisted was almost all conveyed to Bassora.

This is a large city, built by the Arabs in the height of their prosperity, fifteen leagues below the place where the Tigris and Euphrates meet, and at the same distance from the Persian gulf, into which these rivers empty themselves. Its inhabitants are computed at fifty thousand; consisting of Arabs, fifteen hundred Armenians, and a small number of families of different nations, whom the hope of gain has attracted. Its territory abounds in rice, fruits, pulse, cotton, and particularly in dates.

The port of Bassora, as those who first established it foresaw, became a famous mart. The merchandize of Europe was brought there by the Euphrates, and that of India by sea. The tyranny of the Portuguese intercepted this communication. It would have been opened again when their power declined, had not this unhappy country continually been the scene of the disputes between the Arabs, the Persians, and the Turks. These last, become peaceful possessors of Bassora, have availed themselves of the misfortunes of their neighbours, to bring trade back to this city; the harbour of which has recovered its splendour and importance.

This change has not been effected without difficulty. At first, the people of the country would not permit the traders to come out of the river. They foresaw, that if these foreigners were permitted to settle in the city, they would not be so much under their direction, and might lay up in their magazines such of their commodities as they could not sell during one monsoon, with a view of disposing of them with greater advantage at another time.

To this maxim, which was the result of an ill-judged avarice, were added others arising from superstitious notions. It was deemed a violation of the respect due to religion to permit infidels to inhabit a city consecrated by the blood of so many martyrs and saints of the Mohammedan persuasion; a prejudice that seemed to have some weight with the government; but these scruples were silenced. Pecuniary considerations were offered by the European nations, and they were allowed to establish factories, and even to display their respective flags upon them.

REVOLUTIONS are so frequent in Asia, *Present state of trade in the Persian gulf, and of that of the English in particular.* that trade cannot possibly be carried on in the same continued track as it is in Europe. These events, joined to the little communication between the different states, either by land or by sea, must naturally occasion great variations in the quantity and value of commodities. Bassora, on account of its great distance from the centre of trade, is more exposed to this inconvenience than any other place. However, upon an average, we need not be under any apprehension of departing much from the strictest truth, when we venture to estimate the merchandize annually brought there by way of the gulf at twelve millions [500,000l.] Of this the English furnish four millions [166,666l. 13s. 4d.] the Dutch two [83,333l. 6s. 8d.] the French, the Moors, the Indians, the Armenians and Arabs, furnish the remainder.

The cargoes of these nations consist of rice, sugar, plain, striped, and flowered, muslins, from Bengal; spices, from Ceylon and the Molucca islands; coarse, white, and blue cottons, from Coromandel: cardamom, pepper, sanders-wood, from Malabar; gold and silver stuffs, turbans, shawls, indigo, from Surat; pearls from Baharen, and coffee from Mocha; iron, lead, and woollen cloth from Europe. Other articles, of less consequence, are imported from different places. Some of these commodities are shipped on board small Arabian vessels; but the greater part is brought by European ships, which have the advantage of a considerable freight.

This merchandize is sold for ready money; and passes

through the hands of the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. The Banians are employed in changing the coin current at Bassora, for that which is of higher value in India.

The different commodities collected at Bassora are distributed into three channels. One half of them goes to Persia, where they are conveyed by the caravans; there being no navigable river in the whole empire. The chief consumption is in the northern provinces, which have not been so much ravaged as those in the south. Both of them formerly made their payments in precious stones, which were become common, by the plunder of India. They had afterwards recourse to copper utensils, which had been exceedingly multiplied from the great abundance of copper mines. At last, they gave gold and silver in exchange, which had been concealed during a long scene of tyranny, and are continually digged out of the bowels of the earth. If time be not allowed for the trees that produce gum, and have been cut to push out fresh shoots; if no attention be paid to multiply the breed of goats which afford such fine wool; and if the silks, which are hardly sufficient to supply the few manufactures remaining in Persia, continue to be scarce; in a word, if this empire does not rise again from its ashes, the mines will be exhausted, and this source of commerce must be given up.

The second channel is a more sure one, by the way of Bagdad, Aleppo, and other intermediate towns, whose merchants come to buy their goods at Bassora. Coffee, linen, spices, and other merchandize that pass this way, are taken in exchange for gold, French woollen cloths, galls, and orpiment, which is an ingredient in colours, and much used by the eastern people to extirpate their hair.

Another much less considerable channel is that of Arabia Deserta. The Arabs, bordering upon Bassora, repair annually to Aleppo in the spring, to sell camels. It is usual to give them credit for muslins, which they buy very cheap, to the amount of six hundred thousand livres [25,000l]. They return in the autumn, bringing woollen cloths, coral, hardware, and some glass and mirrors from Venice. The Arabian caravans are never molested in their journey, nor are foreigners in any danger, if they take care to carry along with them a person belonging to

each of the tribes they may happen to meet with. This road through the desert would be universally preferred to that of Bagdad, on account of safety, expedition, and the advantages of sale, if the pacha of the province, who has established tolls in different parts of his territory, did not use every possible precaution to hinder this communication. It is only by eluding the vigilance of his deputies, that one can prevail upon the Arabs to carry with them some goods, which will not take up much room.

Beside these exportations, there is rather a considerable consumption, especially of coffee, at Bassora, and the territories belonging to it. These articles are paid for in dates, pearls, rose-water, dried fruits, and grain, when that is allowed to be disposed of to foreigners.

This trade would be more extensive, if it were freed from the shackles that confine it. But the activity that might be expected from the natives of the country is continually damped by the oppressions they labour under, especially at a distance from the centre of the empire. The foreigners are no less oppressed by governors, who derive from their extortions the advantage of maintaining themselves in their office, and frequently of securing their lives. Were it possible, in some measure, to assuage this thirst of gold, it would soon be renewed by the rivalry of the European nations, whose sole aim is to supplant one another, and who, to succeed in this design, scruple not to employ the most execrable expedients. A striking instance of this odious spirit of jealousy happened in 1748.

Baron Knyphausen managed the Dutch factory at Bassora with extraordinary success. The English found themselves in imminent danger of losing the superiority they had acquired at this place, as well as in most of the sea-ports in India. The dread of an event which must wound at the same time their interests and their vanity, betrayed them into injustice. They excited the Turkish government to suppress a branch of trade that was useful to it, and procured an order for the confiscation of the merchandize and possessions of their rivals.

The Dutch factor, who, under the character of a merchant, concealed the statesman, instantly took a resolution

worthy of a man of genius. He retired with his dependents, and the broken remains of his fortune, to Karek, a small island, at the distance of fifty leagues from the mouth of the river; where he fortified himself in such a manner, that, by intercepting the Arabian and Indian vessels bound for the city, he compelled the government to indemnify him for the losses he had sustained by its behaviour. The fame of his integrity and abilities drew to his island the privateers of the neighbouring ports, the merchants, even of Bassora, and the Europeans who traded there. The prosperity of this new colony was daily increasing, when it was forsaken by its founder. The successor of this able man did not display the same talents. Towards the end of the year 1765, he suffered himself to be dispossessed of his island by the Arabian corsair Mirmahana. The company lost an important post, and more than two millions [83,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*], in artillery provisions, and merchandize.

By this event, Bassora was freed from a rivalry that was prejudicial to its interests; but an unforeseen and much more formidable one has succeeded in its room, which is that of Mascate. The Persian gulf is bordered on the west by the eastern coast of Arabia. The inhabitants of this region have nothing for subsistence, but a few dates, and the produce of a plentiful fishery, obtained with ease. Even the small quantity of cattle that can be raised there, is fed only upon fish. Every little district has a sheik of its own, who is obliged to provide for the wants of his family, by his labour or his industry. On the first signal of the least danger, these people fly for refuge into the neighbouring islands, from whence they do not return to the continent till the enemy is withdrawn. There is no place in the country that was ever worth preserving, except Mascate. The great Albuquerque made himself master of this city in 1507, and ruined its trade, which he intended to transfer entirely to Omus. When the Portuguese had lost this small kingdom, they were desirous of bringing the trade back to this place. Their endeavours proved ineffectual; and the navigators bent their course to Gombroon. They dreaded the insolence of the old tyrants of India, and were unwilling to rely upon their fidelity. No vessels entered the harbour, except



those brought in by the Portuguese themselves. It ceased to be frequented by the ships of every nation, after these imperious masters were driven from it in 1648. Their pride prevailing over their views of interest, made them no longer desirous of going there : and they had still a sufficient degree of influence to prevent any ships from entering the harbour or going out of it.

The decline of their power tempted the inhabitants of Mascate to the same acts of piracy which they themselves had so long been exposed to. They made descents upon the coasts of their ancient oppressors ; and the success they met with encouraged them to attack the small Moorish and European vessels that frequented the Persian gulf. But they were so severely chastised for their plunderers by several nations, and especially by the English, that they were obliged to desist. From that period, the city sank into a state of obscurity, which was prolonged for a considerable time by intestine broils and foreign invasions. At length, the government assuming a more regular form at Mascate, and in the whole country under the jurisdiction of its iman, its commerce began to revive about the year 1749.

The articles of consumption in the country itself, are rice, blue linens, iron, lead, sugar, and some spices ; the returns for which are made in myrrh, incense, gum-arabic, and a small quantity of silver. This trade, however, would not be considerable enough, to invite ships to this place, if Mascate, which is situated pretty near the entrance of the Persian sea, were not an excellent mart for the innermost part of the gulf. All trading nations begin to give it the preference to Bassora, because it makes their voyage shorter by three months : they are free from any kind of extortion ; and imposts are lowered to one and a half per cent. The merchandize, indeed is afterwards to be carried to Bassora, where it pays a tax of three per cent ; but the Arabs sail with so little expence, and have so many methods of eluding the tolls, that they will always find their account in disposing of their goods at Mascate. Beside this, the dates, which are produced at Bassora in greater plenty and perfection than any other article, and are often spoiled on board large vessels that sail slowly, are conveyed with the utmost expedition in light barks to

Malabar and the Red sea. There is a particular reason which will always induce the English, who trade for themselves, to frequent Mascate. They are there exempted from the five per cent. which they are obliged to pay at Bassora, as well as at all other places where their company have made settlements.

The company have never attempted to establish themselves on the island of Baharen; which we are at a loss to account for. This island, which lies in the Persian gulf, has often changed its masters. It fell, with Ormus, under the dominion of the Portuguese, and was governed by the same laws. These conquerors were afterwards deprived of it, and it has since undergone a variety of revolutions. Thamas Kouli Khan restored it to Persia, to which it had belonged. This haughty usurper at that time conceived the plan of forming a most immense empire. He wished to extend it over two seas, some coasts of which he already possessed: but finding that his subjects opposed his design instead of favouring of it, he had recourse to one of those arbitrary acts which tyrants make no scruple of exercising, and transported his subjects in the Persian gulf to the Caspian sea, and those in the Caspian sea to the Persian gulf. This double transmigration appeared to him calculated to break the connections which both these people had formed with his enemies, and of securing their fidelity, if he could not engage their attachment. His death put a period to his vast designs; and the confusion into which his empire was thrown, afforded a fair opportunity to an ambitious and enterprising Arab of taking possession of Baharen, where he still maintains his authority.

This island, famous for its pearl fishery, even at the time when pearls were found at Ormus, Kerek, Keshy, and other places in the gulf, is now become of much greater consequence, since the other banks have been exhausted, while this has suffered no sensible diminution. The fishery begins in April, and ends in October. It is confined to a tract of four or five leagues. The Arabs, who alone follow this employment, pass their nights upon the island or the coast, unless they are prevented by the wind from going on shore. They formerly paid a toll, which was received by the galliots on that station. Since the

last alteration, none but the inhabitants of this island pay this acknowledgment to their sheik, who is not in a condition to demand them from others.

The pearls taken at Baharen, though not so white as those of Ceylon and Japan, are much larger than those of the former place, and of a more regular shape than those of the latter. They are of a yellowish cast; but have this recommendation, that they preserve their golden hue; whereas the whiter kind lose much of their lustre by keeping, particularly in hot countries. The shell of both these species, which is known by the name of mother of pearl, is used in Asia for various purposes.

The annual revenue arising from the fishery in the latitude of Baharen, is computed at 3,600,000 livres [150,000l.] The greatest part of the pearls that are uneven, are carried to Constantinople, and other ports of Turkey; where the larger compose part of the ornaments of the head-dress, and the smaller are used in works of embroidery. The perfect pearls must be reserved for Surat, from whence they are distributed throughout all Indostan. The women have so strong a passion for luxury, and the sale of this article is so much increased by superstition, that there is not the least reason to apprehend any diminution either in the price or the demand. There are none of the gentiles who do not make it a point of religion to bore at least one pearl at the time of their marriage. Whatever may be the mysterious meaning of this custom among a people whose morality and politics are couched in allegories, or where allegory becomes religion; this emblem of virgin modesty has proved advantageous to the pearl trade. The pearls that have not newly been bored, make a part of dress; but cannot have a place in the marriage ceremony, where one new pearl is at least indispensable. They are accordingly always sold five and twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than those which come from the gulf where they are taken. There are no pearls at Malabar; but it has riches of another kind.

MALABAR is, properly speaking, a *Description of*  
country situated between Cape Comorin *the coast of Ma-*  
and the river of Neticeram. But to *labar, &c.*

make our narrative the better understood, by accommodating it to the notions generally received in Europe, we shall give this name to the whole tract extending from the Indus to Cape Comorin, including the adjacent islands, and beginning with the Maldives.

The Maldives form a long chain of islands to the west of Cape Comorin, which is the nearest part of the continent. They are divided into thirteen provinces, which are called atollons. This division is the work of nature, that has furrounded each atollon with a barrier of rocks, furnishing a better defence than the strongest fortification against the impetuosity of the waves, or the attacks of an enemy. The natives reckon the number of these islands at twelve thousand; the smallest of which are nothing more than banks of sand that are overflowed at high tides, and the largest very small in circumference. Of all the channels that separate them, there are only four capable of receiving ships: the rest are so shallow, that they have seldom more than three feet water. It is conjectured, with probability, that all these different islands were formerly one, and that the force of the waves and currents, or some great natural event, has divided them into several portions.

It is probable, that this archipelago was originally peopled from Malabar. Afterwards the Arabians went there, usurped the sovereignty, and established their own religion. At length, the two nations were united into one; when the Portuguese, soon after their arrival in India, reduced them to subjection. This tyranny was of short continuance. The garrison, which held them in slavery was exterminated, and the Maldives recovered their independence. Since this period, they have fallen under the yoke of an arbitrary prince, who keeps his court at Male, and has resigned the whole authority to the priests. He is the sole merchant in his dominions.

An administration of this stamp, and the barrenness of the country, which produces nothing but cocoa trees, prevents the trade from being considerable. The exports consist only of cowries, fish, and kayar.

Kayar is the bark of the cocoa tree, of which cables are made, that serve for the Indian navigation. This is nowhere so good, and in such plenty, as in the Maldives. A

great quantity of it is carried, with some cowries, to Ceylon, where these commodities are exchanged for the areca nut.

The fish called in the country complemasse, is dried in the sun. It is salted by dipping it several times in sea-water, and cut into pieces of the thickness and length of a man's finger. Two cargoes of it are annually brought to Achen, which are purchased with gold and benzoin. The gold remains in the Maldives; and the benzoin is sent to Mocha, where it procures in return about three hundred bales of coffee for the consumption of these islands.

Cowries are white and shining shells. The inhabitants fish for them twice a-month; three days before the new moon, and three days after. This employment belongs to the women, who wade to the middle in water to gather them upon the sands. They are put up in parcels, each containing twelve thousand. Those that are not circulated in the country, or carried to Ceylon, are sent to the banks of the Ganges. A great number of vessels annually sail from this river, laden with sugar, rice, linen, and other less considerable articles, for the use of the Maldives, and return with cargoes of cowries, valued at about seven oreighthundredthousandlivres [from 29,166*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to 33,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] One part is circulated in Bengal, where it serves as small coin. The rest is taken off by the Europeans, who use it with advantage in their trade with Africa. They buy it at six sols [about 3*d.*] a pound and sell it from twelve to eighteen [near 8*d.* on an average.] in their several capitals: it is worth thirty five livres [11*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*] in Guinea.

The kingdom of Travancor, which extends from Cape Comorin, to the frontiers of Cochin, was not formerly in possession of a greater share of opulence than the Maldives. It is probable that it owed the preservation of its independency to its poverty, when the Moguls made themselves masters of Madura. One of their monarchs, who ascended the throne about the year 1730, and who reigned near forty years, added more dignity to his crown than it had ever had before. He was a man of exquisite and deep sense. He was giving audience to two ambassadors that had been sent him by a neighbouring state,

one of whom began a long harangue, which the other was preparing to continue: "be not tedious," said the prince, with an austere brow, "life is short." His reign was sullied only by one act of weakness; he was of the tribe of the Nairs, and thought it a disgrace to him that he did not belong to the superior cast. In the view of being incorporated into it, as much as it was possible, in the year 1752, he caused a golden calf to be cast, which he entered into by the muzzle, and came out at the opposite part. Since that time, his edicts were all dated from the day of so glorious a regeneration; and, to the great scandal of all Indostan, he was acknowledged for a bramin, by all those of his subjects who enjoyed this important prerogative.

With the assistance of a Frenchman named Le Noye, this monarch had formed the best disciplined army that had ever been seen in these countries. With these forces it is said that he meditated the conquest of all the Malabar; and perhaps his ambition might have been crowned with success, had it not been opposed by the European nations. Notwithstanding these impediments he succeeded in enlarging his dominions; and, what was infinitely more difficult, in rendering his usurpations useful to his subjects. In the midst of the tumult of arms, agriculture was encouraged; and some coarse manufactures of cotton were set on foot.

There are two European settlements in the kingdom of Travancor: that of the Danes at Kolechey has scarce any trade. It is very seldom, indeed, that the smallest purchase or sale is ever made there by the people of that nation.

The English factory of Anjengo is situated on a point of land at the mouth of a small river, which, during the greatest part of the year is choked up with sand. The town is well peopled, and full of manufactures. It was formerly defended by four small bastions without a ditch, and by a garrison of one hundred and fifty men. This expence has been thought unnecessary. A single agent now takes care of all the business, with less parade and more advantage.

Territory of Anjengo, thou art nothing; but thou hast given birth to Eliza. A day will come, when these sta-

ples of commerce founded by the Europeans on the coasts of Asia will exist no more. Before a few centuries are elapsed, the grass will cover them, or the Indians avenged, will have built upon their ruins. But if my works be destined to have any duration, the name of Anjengo will not be obliterated from the memory of man. Those who shall read my works, or those whom the winds shall drive towards these shores, will say: there it is that Eliza Draper was born; and if there be a Briton among them, he will immediately add, with the spirit of conscious pride, and there it was that she was born of English parents.

Let me be permitted to indulge my grief, and to give a free course to my tears! Eliza was my friend. Reader, whosoever thou art, forgive me this involuntary emotion. Let my mind dwell upon Eliza. If I have sometimes moved thee to compassionate the calamities of the human race, let me now prevail upon thee to commiserate my own misfortune. I was thy friend without knowing thee; be for a moment mine. Thy gentle pity shall be my reward.

Eliza ended her days in the land of her forefathers, at the age of three and thirty. A celestial soul was separated from a heavenly body. Ye who visit the spot on which her sacred ashes rest, write upon the marble that covers them,—in such a year, in such a month, on such a day, at such an hour, God withdrew his spirit, and Eliza died.

And thou, original writer, her admirer and her friend, it was Eliza who inspired thy works, and dictated to thee the most affecting pages of them. Fortunate Sterne, thou art no more, and I am left behind. I wept over thee with Eliza; thou wouldst weep over her with me; and had it been the will of Heaven, that you had both survived me, your tears would have fallen together upon my grave.

The men were used to say, that no woman had so many graces as Eliza: the women said too. They all praised her candour; they all extolled her sensibility; they were all ambitious of the honour of her acquaintance.

The stings of envy were never planted against unconscious merit.

Anjengo, it is to the influence of thy happy climate that she certainly was indebted for that almost incompatible harmony of voluptuousness and decency, which diffused itself over all her person, and accompanied all her motions. A statuary who would have wished to represent voluptuousness, would have taken her for his model; and she would equally have served for him who might have had a figure of modesty to display. Even the gloomy and clouded sky of England had not been able to obscure the brightness of that aerial kind of soul, unknown in our climates. In every thing that Eliza did, an irresistible charm was diffused around her. Desire, but of a timid and bashful cast followed her steps in silence. Any man of courtesousness, alone must have loved her, but would not have dared to own his passion.

I search for Eliza everywhere: I discover, I discern some of her features, some of her charms, scattered among those women whose figure is most interesting. But what is become of her who united them all? Nature, who hast exhausted thy gifts to form an Eliza, didst thou create her only for one moment? Didst thou make her to be admired for one instant, and to be for ever regretted.

All who have seen Eliza, regret her. As for myself, my tears will never cease to flow for her all the time I have to live. But is this sufficient? Those who have known her tenderness for me, the confidence she had bestowed upon me, will they not say to me she is no more, and yet thou livest.

Eliza intended to quit her country, her relations, her friends, to take up her residence along with me, and spend her days in the midst of mine. What happiness had I not promised to myself? What joy did I not expect, from seeing her sought after by men of genius, and beloved by women of the nicest taste? I said to myself, Eliza is young, and thou art near thy latter end. It is she who will close thine eyes. Vain hope! Fatal reverse of all human probabilities! My old age has been prolonged beyond the days of her youth. There is now no person in



the world existing for me. Fate has condemned me to live, and die alone.

Eliza's mind was cultivated, but the effects of this art were never perceived. It had done nothing more than embellished nature, it served in her only to make the charm more lasting. Every instant increased the delight she inspired ; every instant rendered her more interesting. Such is the impression she had left in India ; such is the impression she made in Europe. Eliza then was very beautiful? No, she was simply beautiful : but there was no beauty she did not eclipse, because she was the only one that was like herself.

Eliza has written ; and the men of her nation, whose works have been the most abounding in elegance and taste, would not have disavowed the small number of pages she has left behind her.

When I saw Eliza, I experienced a sensation unknown to me. It was too warm to be no more than friendship ; it was too pure to be love. Had it been a passion, Eliza would have pitied me ; she would have endeavoured to bring me back to my reason, and I should have completely lost it.

Eliza used frequently to say, that she had a greater esteem for me than any for one else. At present I may believe it.

In her last moments, Eliza's thoughts were fixed upon her friend : and I cannot write a line without having before me the monument she has left me. Oh ! that she could also have endowed my pen with her graces and her virtue ! Methinks, at least, I hear her say, " That stern muse that looks at you, is History, whose awful duty it is to determine the opinion of posterity. That fickle deity that hovers o'er the globe, is Fame, who condescended to entertain us a moment about you ; she brought me thy works, and paved the way for our connection by esteem. Behold that phoenix immortal amidst the flames : it is the symbol of Genius, which never dies. Let these emblems perpetually incite thee to shew thyself the defender of *humanity*, of *truth*, and of *liberty*."

Eliza, from the highest heaven, thy first, and last coun-

try, receive my oath : *I swear not to write one line in which thy friend may not be recognized.*

Cochin was a place of great note when the Portuguese arrived in India. They made themselves masters of it, and were afterwards dispossessed by the Dutch. The sovereign, at the time this place was taken from him, had preserved his dominions, which, in the space of five and twenty years, have been repeatedly invaded by the people of Travancor. His misfortunes have obliged him to take refuge under the walls of his ancient capital, where he lives upon a revenue of 14,400 livres [600*l.*] which was stipulated to be paid him by ancient capitulations, out of the produce of his customs. In the same suburb is a colony of industrious Jews, who are white men, and ridiculously pretend to have been settled here since the time of the Babylonish captivity, but have certainly been in this situation a very considerable time. A town encompassed with fertile lands and built upon a river that receives vessels of five hundred tons burden, and communicates by several navigable branches to the interior parts of the country, may naturally be expected to be in a flourishing condition. If it be otherwise, it is entirely owing to the oppressive nature of the government.

This oppressive spirit is at least as sensibly felt at Calicut : all nations are admitted thither, but none have any sway. The sovereign who rules there at present is a brahmin ; and the people are consequently under a theocracy, which, in process of time, becomes the worst of all governments, because the hand of the gods adds to the weight of the sceptre of the tyrants, and the sanctity of one of the authorities, occasions a blind submission, and under pain of sacrilege, to the caprices of the other. The orders of the despot are changed into oracles, and the disobedience of the subjects incurs the stigma of a revolt against heaven. The throne of Calicut is almost the only one in India that is filled by a person of this first of the casts. In other places, the crown is worn by inferior tribes, and even by persons of so obscure a cast, that their domestics would be dishonoured and banished from their tribes, if they condescended even to eat with their monarchs. These people take care not to boast of having supped with the king : this prejudice is not, perhaps,

more ridiculous than any other. It humbles the pride of princes, and deprives courtiers of one source of vanity. Such is the influence of superstition, that it gives rise to the universal prevalence of opinion. By superstition artifice divides the empire with power : when the latter has conquered and enslaved the world, the former interposes and prescribes laws in its turn : they enter into a league with each other, mankind fall prostrate, and submit to their chains. If it should happen that these two powers, being dissatisfied, should rise up the one against the other, then it is that the blood of the citizens is seen streaming in the streets. One party ranges itself under the standard of superstition, the other under the banners of the sovereign. Fathers murder their children ; and children plunge, without hesitation, the poniard in the breast of their fathers. Every idea of justice is at an end ; every sentiment of humanity is annihilated ; man seems metamorphosed at once into a wild beast. The cry on one side is, rebels, obey your monarch ; on the other, sacrilegious, impious men, obey your God, the master of your king, or die. I shall address myself, then, to all the sovereigns of the earth, and I shall venture to reveal to them the secret thought of the priesthood. If the priest were to explain himself frankly, he would say, if the sovereign be not my licitor, he is mine enemy ; I have put the axe into his hand, but on condition that I shall point out to him the heads that are to be struck off. The brahmins, the depositaries of religion and the sciences throughout Indostan, are employed as ministers in most of the states, and dispose of every thing at pleasure ; but affairs are not the better managed on that account.

The administration of Calicut is bad in general, and that of the capital still worse. No police is established, no fortifications are raised. The trade, which is clogged with a multiplicity of imposts, is almost entirely in the hands of a few of the most abandoned and faithless Moors in Asia. One of its greatest advantages is, that by the river Baypore, which is only at two leagues distance, it has the means of being furnished with teak timber, which grows upon the plains and mountains in great abundance.

The territories that border upon Calicut, and belong

to the house of Colastry, are little known, except by the French colony at Mahe, which is rising up again from its ashes, and that of the English at Tellicherry, which has experienced no misfortune. The latter, which contains a population of fifteen or sixteen thousand souls, had three hundred white men and five hundred blacks for its defence; they have been recalled since the nation has acquired in these seas an ascendant, which removes the apprehension of seeing the settlement insulted. At present they draw from thence annually (with very little expence) fifteen hundred thousand pounds weight of pepper, and some other provisions of little importance.

If we except a few principalities that scarce deserve mention, the states we have been describing properly constitute the whole of the Malabar, a country more agreeable than opulent. The exports consist chiefly of aromatics and spices. The principal articles are sanders-wood, India saffron, cardamom, ginger, bastard cinnamon, and pepper.

The fantalum or sanders grows to the size of a walnut tree. Its leaves are entire oval, and placed opposite to each other. Its flower is of one single piece, charged with eight stamina, and supported upon the pistil, which becomes an insipid berry, resembling in form that of the laurel. Its wood is white in the circumference, and yellow in the centre, when the tree is old. This difference of colour constitutes two kinds of sanders, both employed for the same purposes, and having equally a bitter taste, and an aromatic smell. With the powder of this wood a paste is prepared, with which the Chinese, Indians, Persians, Arabians, and Turks, anoint their bodies. It is likewise burnt in their houses, and yields a fragrant and wholesome smell. The greatest quantity of this wood, to which a sharp and attenuating virtue is ascribed, remains in India. The red sanders, though in less estimation, and less generally used, is sent by preference into Europe. This is the produce of a different tree, which is common on the coast of Coromandel. Some travellers confound it with the wood of Caliatour, which is used in dyeing.

The Indian saffron, called by the physicians curcuma, or terra merita, has a very low and herbaceous stem, formed by the union of the buds, and composed of five or six ry long leaves, which bear upon very long stalks. The

flowers, disposed in a husky spike near the root, are purplish, with six unequal divisions; they have but one stamina, supported, as they are, upon the pistil, which becomes a capsula with three divisions, full of round seeds. The root is composed of five or six oblong and knotty tubercles. It is reckoned to have an aperient quality, and to be a remedy for the jaundice. The Indians make a yellow dye of it; and it is an ingredient in most of their dishes.

Several kinds of cardamom are found in the different countries of India, and the distinct characters of them have not been sufficiently observed. That which grows in the territories of Cochin, Calicut, and Cananor, is the smallest and most esteemed. It has, as well as the other sorts, a great deal of analogy with the Indian saffron, from which it differs, in having its leaves much more numerous, its stem higher, its spike of flowers looser, and coming immediately from the root, and its fruit less. Its seeds, which have an agreeable aromatic flavour, are used in most Indian ragouts. It is often mixed with areca and betel, and sometimes chewed afterwards; and is used in medicine, chiefly to help digestion, and to strengthen the stomach. The cardamom has no need of cultivation, and grows naturally in places covered with the ashes of plants that have been burnt.

The ginger resembles the cardamom, both in the disposition and structure of its flowers. The spike comes from the same point. The root, which is knotty and creeping, shoots out several stems of three feet high, the leaves of which are narrower. It is white, tender, and almost as pungent to the palate as pepper. The Indians put it into their rice, which is their common diet, to correct the natural insipidity of this food. This spice, mixed with others, gives the dishes seasoned with it a strong taste, which is extremely disagreeable to foreigners. The Europeans, however, who come to Asia in low circumstances, are obliged to accustom themselves to it. Others adopt it out of complaisance to their wives, who are generally natives of the country. It is here, as in all other places, much easier for the men to conform to the taste and foibles of the women, than to get the better of them. Perhaps too the climate may require this manner of liv-

ing. The best ginger is that which is cultivated in the Malabar ; the second sort comes from Bengal. That which grows in the Decan, and in the Indian archipelago, is less esteemed ; if, however, we except the red ginger of the Moluccas, a species differing from the common sort in the colour of its root, and in having a less acid taste.

Bastard cinnamon, known in Europe by the name of *cassia lignea*, is to be had at Timor, Java, and Mindanao ; but that which grows on the Malabar coast is much superior. The tree which produces it, like that of Ceylon, is a species of laurel ; it yields the same produce, and resembles it in most of its characters. Its leaves are longer ; its bark more thick and red ; it has less flavour ; and is distinguished particularly by a kind of viscosity that is perceived in chewing. By these marks we may detect the fraud of the merchants, who sell it mixed with the true cinnamon, the virtues of which are infinitely superior, and the price four times as much. The Dutch, despairing of being able to root up all the trees out of the forests that produce it, contrived to require, during their superiority in Malabar, the sovereigns of the country to renounce their right of barking them. This engagement, which was never strictly observed, has been less fulfilled since the nation that made it has lost its authority, and has advanced the price of the cinnamon of Ceylon. The present produce of the cinnamon at Malabar may be computed at two hundred thousand weight. The smallest portion of it is brought to Europe ; the rest is disposed of in India. The trade is entirely in the hands of the free English merchants ; it may admit of improvement, but will never be equal to that of pepper.

The pepper plant is a shrub, the root of which is fibrous and blackish. Its stem, which is farmentous and flexible, requires a tree or a prop to support it. It is branchy, and full of knots ; from each of which an oval leaf goes off, sharp pointed, very smooth, and marked with five nerves ; and it is of a strong and poignant flavour. Towards the middle of the branches, and more frequently at their extremities we see little buds resembling those of the currant tree, which bear about thirty flowers, composed of two stamina and one pistil. The fruit that succeeds is at first green, then red, and of the bigness of a pea. It is

usually gathered in October, four months after the flowering season, and it is exposed to the sun for seven or eight days. The black colour it then acquires has given it the name of black pepper. It is made white by stripping it of its outward skin. The largest, heaviest, and least shrivelled, is the best.

The pepper plant flourishes in the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Ceylon, and more particularly on the Malabar coast. It is not sown, but planted; and great nicety is required in the choice of the shoots. It produces no fruit till the end of three years; but bears so plentifully the three succeeding years, that some plants yield between six and seven pounds of pepper. The produce from that period continues decreasing; and the shrub declines so fast, that in twelve years time it ceases bearing.

The culture of pepper is not difficult; it is sufficient to plant it in a rich soil, and carefully to pull up the weeds that grow in great abundance round its roots, especially the three first years. As the sun is highly necessary to the growth of the pepper plant, when it is ready to bear, the trees that support it must be lopped, to prevent their shade from injuring the fruit. When the season is over, it is proper to crop the head of the plant. Without this precaution there would be too much wood, and little fruit.

The pepper exported from Malabar, which was formerly entirely in the hands of the Portuguese, and is at present divided between the Dutch, English, and French, amounts to about ten millions weight. At ten shillings a pound [five pence] it is an object of five millions [208,333l. 6s. 8d.] it is exported, with other productions, for half that sum. By the sale of these commodities the country is enabled to purchase rice from the Ganges and Canara, coarse linens from Myfore and Bengal, and several sorts of goods from Europe. The payments in money amount to little or nothing.

Canara, a country bordering upon Malabar, properly so called, has been successfully increased by the provinces of Onor, Baticalla, Bandel, and Cananor, by which it has acquired a considerable degree of extent. It is very fertile, and particularly in rice. It was formerly the most flourishing state in these regions; but it declined when its

sovereign was compelled to give annually from twelve to thirteen hundred thousand livres [from 50,000*l.* to 54,166*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] to the Marattas, his neighbours, to preserve his kingdom from their plunders. It has still continued declining since Heyder Ali-Khan became the master of it. Mangalore, which served for its harbour, has fallen into proportional decay. It has been less frequented by foreign navigators, because provisions were no longer so plentiful there, and because the multiplicity of taxes has increased the price of them excessively. Nevertheless the manners of the place have remained as corrupt as they have been from time immemorial. Canara is always able to supply the most voluptuous courtezans, and the finest dancers in Indostan.

*State of Goa.*

COMMERCE, that raised Venice from her canals, and Amsterdam from her morasses, had rendered Goa the centre of the riches of India, and one of the most celebrated marts of the universe. Time; the revolutions so common in Asia; the pride inseparable from great prosperity; the effeminacy that attends on wealth easily acquired; the competition of more enlightened nations; the embezzlements of the treasury, and those of individuals; perfidious and atrocious acts of all kinds: these causes, and others, perhaps, which have escaped our notice, have hastened the destruction of this proud city. It is now reduced to nothing; and the defects of its administration, the corruption of its citizens, the influence of its monks in public deliberations, do not give any hopes of its re-establishment. Deprived of so many fertile provinces, which implicitly obeyed its laws, it has nothing remaining but the small island on which it is situated, and the two peninsulas that form its harbour.

*Pirates of Angria.*

To the north of Goa, the Marattas, masters of some posts on the sea shore, infested this ocean with their piracies. The mogul, who had just subdued the northern parts of the coast, was highly incensed at them. In order to protect the navigation of his subjects, he equipped a fleet, principally destined to repress this spirit of rapine. At this period the two powers attacked each other. In these repeated and bloody en-



gagements, the Maratta Konna Ji Angria displayed such distinguished talents, that the direction of the maritime forces of his nation was conferred upon him; and soon after, the government of the important fortress of Severn-droog, built upon a small island, at a little distance from the continent.

This extraordinary man had conquered only for himself. He prevailed upon the companions of his victories to adopt his plan of independence; and, with their assistance, he seized upon the ships which he had so long and so fortunately commanded. The efforts made to reduce him to obedience again were ineffectual. The allurements of plunder, and the fame of his generosity, drew even so great a number of intrepid adventurers about him, that it was easy for him to become a conqueror. His dominion extended forty leagues along the coast, from Tamana to Rajapour, and twenty or thirty miles within land, according to the disposition of the places, and the facility of their being defended. Nevertheless he owed his greatest success, and all his reputation, to naval operations, which were continued with the same activity, the same bravery, and the same skill, by the heirs of his name and of his dominions.

At first, these pirates only attacked the Indian, Moorish, or Arabian vessels, that had not purchased passports from them. In process of time, they insulted the flag of the Europeans, who were reduced to the necessity of never sailing without a convoy. This precaution was not only very expensive, but proved also insufficient: even the ships that composed the escort were often attacked, and several times carried off from their anchors.

These depredations had lasted fifty years, when, in 1722, the English joined their forces with those of the Portuguese against these pirates; and it was determined between them to destroy the place of their resort. The expedition was disgraceful and abortive. That which was undertaken by the Dutch, two years after, with seven men of war and two bomb-ketches, met with no better success. At length the Marattas, upon the people of Angria refusing to pay a tribute which had long been customary, agreed to attack the common enemy by land, while the English attacked them by sea. This confede-

they obtained a complete conquest. Most of the harbours and forts were taken in the campaign of 1755. Geriah the capital, surrendered the year following, and with it fell a power, the prosperity of which had been only founded on public calamities. By its ruin, the power of the Marattas, which was formidable already, was unhappily increased.

*Marattas on the coast of Malabar.* THESE people, who had been long confined within the limits of their mountains, have, by degrees, extended themselves towards the sea, and at present possess the large space between Surat and Goa, where they equally threaten these two cities. They are famous for their incursions and depredations on the coast of Coromandel, in the neighbourhood of Delhi, and on the banks of the Ganges; but the centre of their greatest strength, and their fixed station, is at Malabar. That spirit of rapine, which they carry into the countries where they occasionally make inroads, is forsaken in the provinces they have conquered. They have already alleviated the misery of those places which were oppressed for so long a time by the tyranny of the Portuguese, and with which they have successively enlarged their empire. Their conduct has been very different upon the neighbouring seas. They not only plunder all the ships there, which are too weak to resist them, but also give an asylum to foreign pirates, who will consent to share their captures with them.

*Revolutions that have happened at Surat.* SURAT was for a long time the only sea port for the exportation of the manufactures of the mogul empire, and the importation of whatever was necessary to supply its consumption. To secure its allegiance, and provide for its defence, a citadel was built, the commandant of which had no authority over that of the town; care was even taken to choose two governors, who, from their character, were not likely to unite in oppressing trade. Some disagreeable circumstances gave rise to a third power. The Indian seas were infested with pirates, who interrupted the navigation, and prevented devout mus-  
fulmen from making voyages to Mecca. The emperor

thought the chief of a colony of Coffrees, who were settled at Rajapour, would be the proper person to stop the progress of these depredations, and therefore appointed him his admiral. Three lacks of rupees, or 720,000 livres [30,000*l.*] were assigned him for his annual pay. This salary not being punctually paid, the admiral seized the castle, and from that fortress laid the town under contribution. A scene of general confusion ensued; and the avarice of the Marattas, which was always active, became more eager than ever. These barbarians, who had extended their usurpations even to the gates of the place, had for a long time been allowed a third part of the duties, on condition that they should not molest the inland trade. They contented themselves with this contribution, so long as fortune did not throw more considerable advantages in their way. As soon as they perceived this ferment among the citizens, not doubting that one of the parties might be transported so far by resentment as to open the gates to them, they drew their forces near to the walls. The traders finding their effects daily in danger of being plundered, called the English to their assistance in 1759, and aided them in taking the citadel. The court of Delhi confirmed them in the possession of it, and in the exercise of the naval command, together with the appointments annexed to both commissions. This revolution restored some degree of tranquillity to Surat and its nabob; while it made them, however, totally dependent upon the power they had called in to their assistance.

This success enlarged the ambitious views of the agents of the English company. Those among them who conducted the affairs on the Malabar coast were troubled with secret discontent, at not having had any share in the immense fortunes that had been made on the Coromandel coast, and in Bengal. They turned their avaricious views on all sides, and at length, in 1771, fixed them upon Baroche, a large town, situated at the distance of five and thirty miles from the mouth of the river Nerbada, which falls into the gulf of Gambaia, and very anciently celebrated for the richness of its soil, and the abundance of its manufactures. Even the trading

ships cannot get up to it without the assistance of the tide, nor come out but when the tide ebbs.

Five hundred white men, and a thousand blacks, set out from Bombay, to take possession of the place upon the most frivolous pretences. The expedition failed, from the incapacity of the person who was entrusted with the conduct of it. It was resumed next year. The besieged, emboldened by their first success, and still more, perhaps, by an ancient tradition, which promised them that their town would never be taken, defended themselves for a considerable time; but at length their walls were carried by an assault.

During the whole siege, the mother of the nabob had not quitted her son, braving along with him the ravages of the cannon and of the bombs. They went out of the place together, when it was no longer tenable, and were pursued. "Go," said this heroic woman to the companion of her flight, "go, and seek an asylum and succours among your allies; I will retard the march of our enemies, and may perhaps escape them." Finding herself afterwards too closely pressed, she was seen to have recourse to that act so common in Indostan among the women who have kept their daggers: she plunged one into her heart, to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy. Her son did not long survive her.

This prince, before his catastrophe, was obliged to give to the Marattas the six-tenths of his revenue, which did not exceed 1,680,000 livres [70,000*l.*] It was by virtue of their being in possession of Amed-Abad, capital of the Guzarat, that these barbarians exacted this tribute. The English not only refused to submit to this humiliating tribute, but wanted also to extend their rights over the whole province. Claims of so opposite a nature laid the foundations of discord. All these troubles were appeased in 1776 by a treaty, which regulated that the ancient usurpers should preserve their conquests, but that the new ones should have the free possession of Baroche, and that a territory should be added to its own, the taxes upon which were to produce 720,000 livres [30,000*l.*]

The Marattas seemed then to be in a situation which did not permit them to expect so favourable an arrangement. The union subsisting between these pirates had

never been shaken. This harmony had ensured them a decided superiority over the other powers of Indostan, which were perpetually agitated with domestic feuds. Their first divisions broke out in 1773. The brother and the son of their last chief disputed the empire, and the divided subjects took part with the one and the other, according to their respective inclinations or interests.

During the course of these civil wars, the soubah of the decan regained the possession of the provinces which the calamities of the times had obliged him to abandon to these barbarians. Hyder Ali-Khan appropriated to himself that part of their territory that was most suitable to him. The English thought the opportunity favourable for seizing upon Salsette, from whence the Marattas had driven the Portuguese in 1740.

THE conquest of this island was not *Islands of Sal-*  
so easily accomplished as it had been ex- *fette and Bombay.*  
pected. The citadel of Tanah, in which  
all its strength consisted, was defended with a degree of  
skill and perseverance unknown in these regions. When  
it was summoned to surrender, the governor, a man of  
ninety-two years of age, proudly answered "I was not  
sent here for that purpose;" and he immediately dou-  
bled his exertions and his courage. It was not till af-  
ter he had been slain, and after his brave companions  
had sustained a very bloody assault since his death, that  
the British troops entered the place on the 28th Decem-  
ber 1774.

Then it was only that the conqueror found himself mas-  
ter of a territory, which, though it be no more than  
twenty miles long, and fifteen broad, is one of the most  
populous and most fertile in Asia. In the centre of it is  
the mountain of Keneri, full of large and deep excava-  
tions, all of them cut in the body of the rock. These are  
so many pagodas, generally arranged in a line, but some-  
times placed one above the other. They are most fre-  
quently ornamented with figures and inscriptions cut or  
engraved upon stone. The same singularities are ob-  
servable in the island of Elephants, bordering upon Sal-  
sette.

Works of so astonishing a nature have given rise to a

a multiplicity of fabulous accounts. The common people think they were executed five hundred thousand years ago, by divinities of an inferior order. Some bramins ascribe them to Alexander the Great, whom they delight to honour with every thing that appears to them above the natural powers of man. We may reasonably expect, that the English, to whom we are indebted for so much information respecting Asia, will neglect no opportunity of being acquainted with the nature of these monuments, which are capable of throwing so great a light upon the history and religion of the Indies. They will the more easily accomplish this, as Salsette is only separated from Bombay by a very narrow channel.

This island, which is little more than twenty, or five and twenty miles in circumference, was, for a long time, an object of general horror. No man chose to settle upon a territory so unhealthy, as to give rise to the proverb, "that at Bombay a man's life did not exceed two moons." The country places were then filled with bamboos and cocoa trees: it was with stinking fish that the trees were dunged, and the coasts were corrupted with infectious fens. These principles of destruction would undoubtedly have disgusted the English of their colonies, had they not been detained there by the best harbour in Indostan, and the only one which, beside that of Goa, is capable of receiving ships of the line. So singular an advantage made them desirous of correcting the insalubrity of the air, which was easily done by laying the country open, and procuring a drain for the waters. Then the inhabitants of the neighbouring regions, attracted by the mildness of the government, resorted in multitudes to this settlement.

If we cast an eye upon the globe since the origin of history, we shall see men pursued by calamity, and fixing wherever they can be allowed to breathe. Is it not surprising, that the universality, and constant appearance of this phenomenon, has not yet taught the rulers of the earth, that the only way to prevent emigrations, is to make their subjects enjoy a situation mild enough to fix them in the country that gave them birth?

It is computed, that there are at present at Bombay near one hundred thousand inhabitants, seven or eight

thousand of whom are sailors : a few of them are employed in manufactures of silk and cotton. As the larger productions could not prosper upon a rock where the soil has very little depth, the attention of the people has been turned towards the cultivation of an excellent kind of onion, which, together with the fish that is dried there, is advantageously sold in the most distant markets. These labours are not carried on with that degree of indolence so common under a burning sky. The Indian has shewed himself susceptible of emulation ; and his character has been in some measure changed, by the example of the indefatigable Persces. The latter are not fishermen and cultivators alone. The construction, fitting out, and dispatching of ships ; every thing, in a word, which concerns the road, or navigation, is entrusted to their activity and industry.

Before the year 1759, the ships dispatched from Europe to the Red sea, the Persian gulf, and the coast of Malabar, generally went to the coasts where they were to deposit their money and goods, and where they were to take in their fresh lading. At that period, they all went and stopt at Bombay, where all the merchandize from the neighbouring places is collected without expence, since the company have been invested with the dignity of admiral to the great mogul, and, in consequence of this appointment have been obliged to maintain a considerable maritime force in these latitudes.

It was necessary that a staple of this kind should be well supplied with docks, ships, and merchants. Accordingly, the island soon possessed itself of all the navigation, and great part of the trade of Surat, which the other neighbouring marts had before carried on in the Asiatic seas.

These advantages required to be settled upon a firm footing. To effect this, the harbour, which is the centre of so many transactions, and where the fleets sent by Great Britain into the Indian ocean are to be repaired, has been surrounded with fortifications. These works are constructed with solidity, and have no other defect, it is said, than that of being too extensive. They are defended by twelve hundred Europeans, and a much greater number of Asiatic troops.

In 1773, the revenue of Bombay, and all its de-

pendencies, amounted to 13,607,212 livres 10 sols [566,967l. 3s. 4d.] and the expences to 12,711,150 livres [529,631l. 5s.] The state of these numerous colonies has been certainly improved since that period; but we cannot ascertain the amount of these improvements.

*State of Coromandel on the arrival of the English.*

THE possessions of the English and the Marattas on the Malabar coast, are too much intermixed; their interests too contrary; and their claims too extensive, not to make it certain, that sooner or later these two powers will be at variance. It is impossible to determine which of them will be conqueror; this event will depend upon the circumstances they shall happen to be in at the time, upon the alliances they may have formed, and principally upon the statesman who shall direct their political measures, and upon the generals who shall have the command of their armies. Let us see whether tranquillity be more firmly established on the coast of Coromandel and Orissa, which extend from Cape Comorin to the Ganges.

Geographers and historians always consider these two countries, bordering on each other, as distinct, and as inhabited by people who have no resemblance either in their manners or their coin. They also differ in their language. Those of Orissa have an idiom of their own, while their neighbours generally speak the Malabar tongue. But as the commerce in both is nearly the same, and carried on in the same manner, we shall comprehend them both under the single name of Coromandel. The two coasts resemble each other in other respects. In both of them the heats are excessive; but, from the beginning of June to the middle of October, the sea breezes, which blow from ten o'clock in the morning till near ten at night, render the climate supportable. It is still more refreshed in the month of July, and especially in November, by the rains which may be called incessant.

This immense shore is covered, for the space of about a mile, with a sand entirely barren, against which the waves of the Indian ocean break with violence. Formerly, none but canoes, made with planks, very slightly put together, and, as it were, only sown with kayar, landed on



this spot. The first Europeans who came to these shores, were desirous of landing there with larger and stronger built vessels. Repeated misfortune soon cured them of their presumption. They found, in process of time, that nothing was more reasonable than to conform to a practice which had at first appeared to them fit only to be followed by an ignorant and inexperienced people.

There were many reasons which at first occasioned this country to be neglected by the Europeans, who came to India. It was separated by inaccessible mountains from Malabar, where these bold navigators endeavoured to settle themselves. Spices and aromatics, which were the principal objects of their attention were not to be found there. In a word, civil dissensions had banished from it tranquillity, security, and industry.

At that period, the empire of Bishnagar, to which this vast country was subject, was falling to ruin. The first monarchs of that illustrious state owed their power to their abilities. They headed their armies in war; in peace they directed their councils, visited their provinces, and administered justice. Prosperity corrupted them. By degrees, they contracted the habit of withdrawing themselves from the sight of their people, and of leaving the cares of government to their generals and ministers. This conduct paved the way for their ruin. The governors of Visapour, the Carnatic, Golconda, and Orixá, threw off their dependence, and assumed the title of kings. Those of Madura, Tanjore, Mysore, Gingi, and some others, likewise usurped the sovereign authority, but retained their ancient title of naick. This great revolution had just happened when the Europeans appeared upon the coast of Coromandel.

The foreign trade was at that time inconsiderable: it consisted only of diamonds from Golconda, which were carried to Calicut and Surat, and from thence to Osmus or Suez, from whence they are circulated through Europe into Asia. Massulipatan, the richest and most populous city in these countries, was the only market that was known for linens; they were purchased at a great fair annually holden there by the Arabian and Malayan vessels that frequented that bay, and by caravans that ar-

rived from distant parts. The linens were exported to the same places as the diamonds.

*Manner the Europeans settled their trade on the Coromandel coast.*

THE taste for the manufactures of Coromandel, which began to prevail here, inspired all the European nations trading to the Indian seas with the resolution of forming settlements there. They were not discouraged either by the difficulty of conveying goods from the inland parts of the country, where there was no navigable river; by the total want of harbours, where the sea, at one season of the year, is not navigable; by the barrenness of the coasts, for the most part uncultivated and uninhabited; nor by the tyranny and fluctuating state of the government. They thought that industry would come there in quest of money; that Pegu would furnish timber for building, and Bengal corn for subsistence; that a prosperous voyage of nine months would be more than sufficient to complete their ladings; and that by fortifying themselves, they should be secure against the attacks of the weak tyrants that oppressed these countries.

The first colonies were established near the sea-shore. Some of them obtained a settlement by force: most of them were formed with the consent of their sovereigns, and all were confined to a very narrow tract of land. The boundaries of each were marked out by a hedge of thorny plants, which was their only defence. In process of time, fortifications were raised; and the security derived from them, added to the lenity of the government, soon increased the number of colonists. The splendour and independence of these settlements frequently excited the jealousy of the princes in whose dominions they were formed; but their attempts to demolish them proved abortive. Each colony increased in prosperity in proportion to the riches and the wisdom of the nation that had founded it.

None of the companies that exercised an exclusive privilege beyond the Cape of Good Hope, had any concern in the trade of diamonds; which was always left to private merchants, and by degrees fell entirely into the hands of the English, or the Jews and Armenians that lived under

their protection. At present, this grand object of luxury and industry is much reduced. The revolutions that have happened in Indostan have prevented people from resorting to these rich mines ; and the anarchy into which this unhappy country is plunged, leaves no room to hope that they will be again attended to. The whole of the commercial operations on the coast of Coromandel is confined to the purchase of cottons.

The manufacturing of the white cottons bought there, differs so little from that of ours, that it would be neither interesting nor instructive to enter into a minute description of it. The process used in making their printed cottons; which was at first servilely followed in Europe, has since been rendered more simple, and brought to greater perfection, by our manufacturers. The painted cottons, which are likewise bought there, we have not yet attempted to imitate. Those who imagine we have been prevented from undertaking this branch of industry, merely by the high price of labour among us, are mistaken. Nature has not given us the materials necessary for the composition of those bright and indelible colours, which constitute the principal merit of the Indian manufactures ; nor has she furnished us with the waters that are of use to work them up properly.

The Indians do not universally observe the same method in painting their cottons ; either because there are some niceties peculiar to certain provinces, or because different soils produce different dyes for the same uses.

We should tire the patience of our readers, were we to trace the slow and painful progress of the Indians in the art of painting their cottons. It is natural to believe that they have derived it from their antiquity, rather than from the fertility of their genius. The circumstance that seems to authorize this conjecture is, that they have stopped in their improvements, and have not advanced a single step in the arts for many ages ; whereas we have proceeded with amazing rapidity, and view, with an emulation full of confidence, the immense space that lies between us and the goal. Indeed, were we to consider only the want of invention in the Indians, we should be tempted to believe that, from time immemorial, they had received the arts they cultivate from some more industrious nation :

but when it is remembered that these arts are entirely dependent on the materials, gums, colours, and productions of India, we cannot but be convinced that they are natives of that country.

It may appear somewhat surprising that cottons painted with all colours should be sold at so moderate a price, that they are almost as cheap as those which have only two or three. But it must be observed, that the merchants of the country sell to all the companies a large quantity of cottons at a time; and that the demand for cottons painted with various colours makes but a small article in their assortments, as they are not much esteemed in Europe.

Though cottons of all sorts be in some degree manufactured throughout the whole country of Indostan, which extends from Cape Comorin to the banks of the Ganges, it is observable, that the fine sorts are made in the eastern part, the common ones in the centre, and the coarse ones in the most western districts. Manufactures are established in the European colonies, and upon the coast: they are more frequent at the distance of five or six leagues from the sea, where cotton is more cultivated, and provisions are cheaper. The purchases made there are carried thirty or forty leagues further into the country. The Indian merchants settled in our factories have always the management of this business.

The quantity and quality of the goods wanted are settled with these people; the price is fixed according to the patterns; and, at the time the contract is made, a third or a fourth part of the money agreed for is advanced. This arrangement is owing to the necessity these merchants themselves lie under, of advancing money to the workmen by the many partners or agents who are dispersed throughout the whole country; by their being obliged to keep a watchful eye upon them, for the sake of securing the produce of these manufactures; and to diminish the quantity gradually, by withdrawing from the manufactures every piece that is finished. Without these precautions, the Europeans would never receive what they require. The weavers, indeed, fabricate for their own profit whatever is used in home consumption. These undertakings, which require only a small capital, and a capital too which returns every week, are seldom beyond

the reach of the greatest number of them : but few of them have means sufficient, without being assisted, to work the fine linens destined for exportation ; and those who had it in their power would not do it, from a well-grounded apprehension of the exactions that are too common under a government so oppressive.

The companies that have either capitals or good management constantly keep the stock of one year in advance in their settlements. By this method they are sure of having the quantity of goods they have occasion for, and of the quality they choose, at the most convenient time : not to mention that their workmen, and their merchants who are kept in constant employment, never leave them.

Those nations that want money and credit cannot begin their mercantile operations till the arrival of their ships. They have only five or six months at most, to execute the orders sent from Europe. The goods are manufactured and examined in haste ; and they are even obliged to take such as are known to be bad, and would be rejected at any other time. The necessity they are under of completing their cargoes, and fitting out their vessels before the hurricanes come on, allow no time for nicety of inspection.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the country agents could be prevailed upon to order goods to be made on their account, in hopes of selling them with a reasonable advantage to the company, in whose service they are engaged. For besides that the generality of them are not rich enough to embark in so large an undertaking, they would not be certain of finding their account in it. If the company that employ them should be prevented, by unforeseen accidents, from sending the usual number of ships, these merchants would have no vent for their commodities. The Indians, the form of whose dress requires different breadths and lengths from those of the cottons fabricated for our use, would not purchase them ; and the other European companies would be provided, or certain of being provided, with whatever the extent of their trade required, and their money enabled them to purchase. The plan of procuring loans, which was contrived to remedy this inconvenience, never has been, or can be useful.

It has been a custom, time immemorial, in Indostan,

for every citizen who borrows money to give a written instrument to his creditor. This deed is of no force in a court of judicature, unless it be signed by three witnesses, and bear the day of the month, and the year when it was made, with the rate of interest agreed upon by the parties. If the borrower should fail to fulfil his engagements, he may be arrested by the lender himself. He is never imprisoned, because there is no fear of his making his escape. He would not even eat without obtaining leave of his creditor.

The Indians make a threefold division of interest; one of which is sin, another neither sin nor virtue, and a third virtue: this is their mode of expression. The interest that is sin is four per cent. a month; and the interest that is neither sin nor virtue, is two; the interest that is virtue, one. The last is, in their opinion, an act of beneficence that only belongs to the most heroic minds. Yet though the Europeans who are forced to borrow, meet with this treatment, it is plain they cannot avail themselves of the indulgence without involving themselves in ruin.

The foreign trade of Coromandel is not in the hands of the natives. In the western part, indeed, there are mohammedans, known by the name of Chalias, who at Naour, and Porto Nuovo, send out ships to Achen, Merguy, and Siam, and the eastern coast. Beside vessels of considerable burden employed in these voyages, they have smaller embarkations for the coasting trade, for Ceylon, and the pearl fishery. The Indians of Massulipatan turn their attention another way. They import white callicos from Bengal, which they dye or print, and sell them again at the places from whence they had them, at thirty-five or forty per cent. advantage.

Excepting these transactions, which are of very little consequence, the whole trade is vested in the Europeans, who have no partners, but a few Banians and Armenians settled in their colonies. The quantity of callicos exported from Coromandel to the different sea-ports in India, may be computed at three thousand five hundred bales. Of these the French carry eight hundred to Malabar, Mocha, and the isle of France; the English, twelve hundred, to Bombay, Malabar, Sumatra, and the Philip-

pine islands, and the Dutch, fifteen hundred, to their several settlements. Except five hundred bales destined for Manilla, each of the value of 2400 livres [100l.] the others are of so ordinary a kind that they do not exceed 720 livres [30l. 10s.] at prime cost; so that the whole number of three thousand five hundred bales does not amount to more than 3,360,000 livres [140,000l.]

Coromandel furnishes Europe with nine thousand five hundred bales: eight hundred of which are brought by the Danes; two thousand five hundred, by the French; three thousand, by the English; and three thousand two hundred, by the Dutch. A considerable part of these calicos is dyed blue, or striped with red and blue for the African trade. The others are fine muslins, printed calicoes, and handkerchiefs, from Massulipatan, or Palicate. It is proved by experience, that, one with another, each bale in the nine thousand five hundred costs only 960 livres [40l.] consequently they ought to bring into the manufactory wherein they are wrought 8,160,000 livres [340,000l.]

The payments are not entirely made in specie, either in Europe or Asia: we give in exchange woollen cloths, iron, lead, copper, coral, and some other articles of less value. On the other hand, Asia pays with spices, rice, sugar, corn, and dates. All these articles taken together, may amount to 4,800,000 livres [200,000l.] From this calculation, it follows, that Coromandel receives 6,720,000 livres [280,000l.] in money.

THE English who have acquired *Possessions of the* the same superiority upon this coast *English on that* that they have elsewhere, have formed on it several settlements. The first that presents itself is Devi-cottah. It was Colonel Lawrence who first seized upon it in 1749. Some political considerations determined the king of Tanjore to give up what had been taken from him, and to add to it a territory of three miles in circumference. In 1758, the place passed under the dominion of the French, but soon after returned, without fortifications, under that of its first conquerors. They flattered themselves, that they should make an important post of it. It was an opinion almost ge-

nerally received, that the river Colram, which washes its walls, might be put in a condition to receive large ships. The coast of Coromandel would not then have been without a harbour; and the nation, in possession of the only road that could be found there, would have had a powerful advantage, both with respect to war and commerce, of which its rival nations would have been deprived. Some unforeseen obstacles must have rendered this project impracticable, since the post has been abandoned, and farmed out for a rent of forty-five, or fifty thousand livres [from 1875l. to 2083l. 6s. 6d.]

In 1686, the English purchased Cudalore, with a territory extending eight miles along the coast, and four miles into the interior part of the country. This acquisition, which they obtained of an Indian prince for the sum of 742,500 livres [30,937l. 12s.], was confirmed to them by the moguls, who soon after made themselves masters of the Carnatic. Considering afterwards, that the fortrefs, which they found ready built, was more than a mile from the sea, and that the reinforcements destined for it might be intercepted, they built fort St. David within cannon shot of it, at the mouth of a river, and on the verge of the Indian ocean. Since that time, three hamlets have been erected, which, with the town and fortrefs, are computed to contain sixty thousand souls. Their employment is dyeing blue, or painting the cottons that come from the inland parts of the country, and manufacturing the finest dimitties in the world, to the amount of 1,500,000 livres [62,500l.] The plundering of this settlement by the French in 1758, and the demolishing of its fortifications, have done it no lasting injury. Its spirit seems rather increased, though St. David has not been rebuilt, and Cudalore is only put into a condition of making a tolerable resistance. A revenue of 144,000 livres [60,000l.] defrays all the expences of this settlement. Maffulipatan affords advantages of another kind.

This town, which is situated at the mouth of the Christina, serves as a harbour for the provinces that formerly constituted the kingdom of Golconda, and for other countries with which it keeps up an easy intercourse, by the means of excellent roads, and by the help of a river. It was anciently the most active, most populous, and richest



market in Indostan. The great settlements successively formed by the Europeans on the coast of Coromandel, made it lose much of its consequence. The French imagined that they could restore it to some of its former splendour, and made themselves masters of it in 1750. Nine years after, it passed from their hands into those of the English, who are still in possession of it.

These last sovereigns have not succeeded, nor will they ever succeed, in bringing Masulipatan to the state in which it was in very ancient times: but their efforts have not been entirely thrown away. As the plants which are used for dyeing the linens, are more plentiful, and of better quality, on this territory, than in any other part, some of the manufactures have been revived, and others extended. This acquisition, however, will always be of less advantage to the English, from the goods they will purchase there, than from those which they may sell. From time immemorial, the people from the inland country used to come in caravans to provide themselves with salt upon this coast. At present, they resort to it from a more considerable distance, and in greater numbers than ever; and carry back with them, along with this article of absolute necessity, many woollen goods, and several other works of European manufacture. This circulation, which has added considerably to the customs, will necessarily increase, unless it should be put a stop to by any of those revolutions which so frequently, and so dreadfully, change the face of this rich part of the globe.

Great Britain also possesses, upon this coast, the provinces of Candavir, of Moutasanagar, of Elur, of Rajamandry, and Chicacol, which extend six hundred miles along the coast, and which run from thirty to ninety miles up the country. The French, who had obtained the cession of them during the short term of their prosperity, lost them at the period of their imprudences and their misfortunes. They became again, though for a little time, part of the foubahship of the decan, from which they had been separated, as it were, by force. In 1766, it became necessary to cede them to the English, whose insatiable ambition was supported by intrigues artfully conducted, and by formidable forces. The colonies which the rival nations had formed in this great space, were unmolested: but Vi-

zagapatam; and the other factories of the ruling people, acquired fresh activity; and the number of them was increased. The country emerged a little from that state of anarchy into which it had been plunged by a series of petty tyrants. It yields a revenue of 9,000,000 of livres [375,000*l.*] of which only 2,025,000 livres [84,375*l.*] are given to the Indian prince who has been stripped of it. The exports from hence are at present five times more considerable than they were ten years ago.

The quantity of labour increases in proportion as the Zemindars, who were originally nothing more than farmers, are deprived of the absolute authority they had usurped during the commotions of their country, in proportion as they are reduced to an impossibility of making war against each other, and in proportion as the districts submitted to their jurisdiction are freed from their oppression. The prosperity would be more rapid and brilliant, if the English government would preserve an immense tract of land from the inundations of the Christina and the Guadavery, with which it is overflowed six months in the year; if these waters were prudently distributed for the purpose of watering the country; and if these two streams were united by a navigable canal. The ancient Indians had an idea of these labours; and, perhaps they were begun. At least they are thought by men of understanding to be very practicable, and attended with little expence.

But how vain would be the hopes of such an improvement? We are not afraid of being accused of injustice, in suspecting that the company is much more engaged with the thoughts of acquiring Orixá, a province which extends along the borders of the sea, from their possessions in Golconda to the banks of the Ganges, which are equally subject to them.

Before the year 1736, this country made part of Bengal. At this period, the Marattas took possession of it, and still maintain themselves in it. They left the European factories undisturbed, and settled in the inland parts. Naagapour is their capital. Their military force consists of forty thousand horse. Their people are chiefly employed in spinning cotton, which they go and sell upon the coast. So great a dismemberment of the rich empire

they have conquered in this part of the globe, is displeasing to the English, and their ambition is to unite it to their dominions.

However this may be, the goods bought, or fabricated in the settlements formed by this nation between Cape Comorin and the Ganges, are all collected at Madras.

This town was built more than a century ago, by William Langhorne, in the country of Arcot, and by the seaside. As he placed it in the midst of a sandy tract, altogether dry, and where there was no water fit for drinking, except what was fetched from the distance of more than a mile, people were curious to know what reasons could have determined him to make so bad a choice. His friends pretended that his view was to draw thither all the trade of St. Thomas, which has actually been the consequence; while his enemies imputed it to a desire of continuing in the neighbourhood of a mistress he had in that Portuguese colony.

Madras is divided into the White town and the Black town. The first of these, more known in Europe by the name of Fort St. George, is inhabited only by the English. For a long time it had only a few fortifications, and those very bad; but some considerable works had lately been added. The Black town, which was formerly quite open, has been surrounded, since the year 1767, with a strong wall, and a ditch filled with water. This precaution, joined to the ruin of Pondicherry, has collected three hundred thousand men, Jews, Armenians, Moors, and Indians, on this spot.

At the distance of a mile from this settlement, is Chepauk, where the court of the nabob of Arcot is fixed, since 1769.

The territory of Madras was formerly nothing: at present, it extends fifty miles west, fifty miles north, and fifty miles south. In this large space, there are considerable manufactures, which are constantly increasing; and various kinds of cultivation, which are becoming more flourishing every day. These different branches of industry keep one hundred thousand persons employed.

These concessions were the reward of a plan which the English had formed, of bestowing the Carnatic on Mohammed-Ali-Khan, of the battles they had fought to

maintain him in the post to which they had raised him, and of the good fortune they had to destroy the power of the French, ever ready to counteract their measures.

The fortunate nabob soon reaped the fruits of his gratitude. His protectors, for their interest, as well as his, undertook to enlarge the bounds of his authority and of his dominions. Before the mogul government had degenerated into anarchy, several Indian and Moorish princes used to send their tributes to the Carnatic, from whence they were to be conveyed to the treasury of the empire. Since all the springs of government were relaxed, this double obligation was no longer fulfilled. The English confirmed the independence of the country, which they considered as their own: but they insisted, that the provinces which had been subordinate to that part of the country, should continue in their former subjection. The weakest of them complied: others, more powerful, ventured to resist; but they were subdued.

These circumstances combined, have given Mohammed-Ali-Khan a very extensive dominion, and a revenue of 31,500,000 livres [1,312,500*l.*] He gives up but nine millions [375,000*l.*] of this to the English, who are obliged to defend his fortresses and his dominions; so that there remains 22,500,000 livres [937,500*l.*] for his personal expences, and the support of his civil government.

The English company had valuable possessions on the coast of Coromandel, eighteen thousand sipahis well disciplined, and three thousand five hundred white troops. They disposed at pleasure of all the forces of the Carnatic. The only European nation that could have given them umbrage was subdued. They seemed, therefore, confirmed in the peaceful enjoyment of so many advantages, when, in 1767, they were attacked by Hyder Ali-Khan, a soldier of fortune, who, after he had learnt the military art from the French, had made great conquests, and become master of Myfore. This daring and active adventurer, at the head of a better army than had ever been commanded by an Indian general, entered boldly into the countries which British valour was bound to defend. The war became a war of stratagem, as this artful commander wished it to be. Experience having taught him to fear the attacks of the infantry and artillery em-

ployed against him, he declined, as much as possible, any regular action, and contented himself with hovering about the enemy, harassing them, carrying off their foragers, and intercepting their provisions, while his cavalry was employed in ravaging the country, plundering the provinces, and spreading desolation as far as to the gates of Madras. These calamities made the English desirous of an accommodation, which they obtained, after a destructive and not very honourable, war of two years.

Since that period, the views of the company have been to prevent Hyder Ali-Khan, the Marattas, and the foubah of the decan, the three chief powers of the peninsula, from making any conquests, or forming any close connection with each other. While they succeed in this political system, they will preserve their superiority on the coast of Coromandel: but they will be obliged to increase their revenue, which, in 1773, did not exceed 24,196,680 livres [1,008,195l.]; or they must diminish their expences, which, at the same period, amounted to 26,397,585 livres [1,089,899l. 7s. 6d.] It will only be after this change has been accomplished that they will be in a condition effectually to protect their settlements at Sumatra.

ALTHOUGH the road of this very *English settlement* extensive island had been frequented by *in Sumatra.* the English ever since their arrival in India, it was not till 1688 that the island received a colony of these people. The navigators dispatched to Madras had orders to fix the factory at Indapoura, the part of the country most abounding in gold; but chance decided the matter otherwise: the winds having driven the ships to Bencoolen, it was thought proper to fix there.

The two nations made their exchanges at first with a great deal of frankness and confidence: but this harmony did not subsist long. The agents of the company soon gave themselves up to that spirit of rapine and tyranny which the Europeans so universally carry into Asia. Clouds of discontent began to arise between them and the natives, which were gradually collected into a storm. The animosity was already at its height, when the foundations of a fortress were seen rising out of the ground,

at the distance of two leagues from the city. At this fight, the inhabitants of Bencoolen took up arms, and were joined by all the country. The magazines were burnt, and the English obliged to embark with precipitation. Their banishment was not of long continuance. They were recalled; and derived from their disaster the advantage of being allowed to finish the construction of Fort Marlborough without opposition.

Their tranquillity was no more disturbed till 1759. At this period, the French took the fort, and destroyed it, together with all the civil and military edifices. The booty was very inconsiderable, because every thing of value had been removed in time. Even before the conclusion of hostilities, the English regained possession of this place; but they did not reinstate the works. Fort Marlborough then shook off the dependence it had hitherto been under to Madras, and constituted a direction of its own.

The Chinese, the Malays, and the slaves brought from the Mozambique, form the population of the English settlement, which is defended by four hundred Europeans and some sipahis. All the trade carried on there belongs to the free merchants, except that of pepper. The company draw from thence annually fifteen hundred tons of it, which they get at an excessive low rate. Half of this produce is conveyed to Great Britain by a single ship; the rest is put on board two vessels sent from Europe, and which carry it to China, where it is disposed of to advantage. In 1773, the revenue of this factory arose to 4,982,895 livres [2c7.62ol. 12s. 6d.] and its expenses were 3,165,480 livres [131,895l.]

*Views of the English upon Balambangan.* THIS colony was not thought sufficiently useful: accordingly, it was to have been abandoned, but not till after the success of a great project that was meditated. The English had for a long time wished for a possession that might become a staple, where the merchandize and provisions of China, and of the oriental islands, might be exchanged for the provisions and merchandize of Indostan and Europe. Their plan was to make it the most considerable mart in Asia. The island of Balamban-

gan, situated at the northern point of Borneo, appeared to them calculated to answer their purpose ; and the king of Solor resigned it to them in 1766. The next year they planted their flag there ; but it was not till 1772 that they formed their settlement. Some clerks, three hundred white or black soldiers, one ship, and two smaller vessels, were the first beginnings of an edifice, which, in process of time, was to be raised to an immense height. Unfortunately the commanders quarrelled ; the few troops that had escaped from fatal diseases were too much scattered ; and the ships went to open a trade with the neighbouring states. Under these inauspicious circumstances, the new factory was attacked, taken, and destroyed.

The English are still ignorant, or pretend to be so, from whence this act of violence, which cost them 9,000,000 livres [375,000l.] proceeded. Their suspicions have appeared to fix alternately upon the Dutch, who are constantly alarmed for the Moluccas ; upon the Spaniards, who might be apprehensive for the Philippine islands ; upon the barbarians of the neighbouring latitudes, whose liberty seemed to be threatened : sometimes even upon a conspiracy of all these enemies, who had united their resentment and their interests. From whatever quarter this unexpected stroke may have come, the mischief is not irremediable. The British nation may recover at Queda, on another part of the continent at Malacca, or in some one of the numerous islands scattered about this strait, what they have lost at Balambangan. If obstacles of too powerful a nature should once more render their attempts ineffectual, they would find a multitude of motives of consolation in Bengal.

BENGAL is a vast country of Asia, *Revolutions in* bounded by the kingdoms of Asham and *Bengal.*

Arracan on the east ; by several provinces belonging to the great mogul on the west ; by dreadful rocks on the north ; and by the sea on the south. It extends on both sides the Ganges, which rises from different sources in Thibet, and, after several windings through Mount Caucasus, penetrates into India, across the mountains on its frontier. This river, after having formed in its course a great number of large, fertile, and well po-

pled islands, discharges itself into the sea by several mouths, of which only two are known and frequented.

Towards the source of this river was formerly a city called Palibothra. Its antiquity was so great, that Diodorus Siculus makes no scruple of assuring us that it was built by that Hercules to whom the Greeks ascribed all the great and surprising actions that had been performed in the world. In Pliny's time, its opulence was celebrated through the whole universe; and it was looked upon as the general mart for the people inhabiting both sides of the river that washed its walls.

The history of the revolutions that have happened in Bengal is intermixed with so many fables that it does not deserve our attention. All we can discover is, that the extent of this empire has been sometimes greater and sometimes less; that it has had fortunate and unfortunate periods; and that it has already been formed into one single kingdom, or divided into several independent states. It was under the dominion of one master, when a more powerful tyrant, Akbar, grandfather of Aurengzebe, undertook the conquest of it; which was begun in 1590, and completed in 1595. Since this era, Bengal has always acknowledged the mogul for its sovereign. At first, the governor to whom the administration of it was intrusted, held his court at Rajamahul, but afterwards removed it to Dacca. Ever since the year 1718, it has been fixed at Muxadavad, a large inland town, two leagues distant from Cassimbuzar. There are several nabobs and rajahs subordinate to this viceroy, who is called soubah.

This important post was occupied for a long time by the sons of the great mogul; but they so frequently made an improper use of the forces and treasure at their disposal, to raise disturbances in the empire, that it was thought proper to commit that province to men who had less influence, and were more dependent. The new governors, indeed, did not give any alarm to the court of Delhi; but they were far from being punctual in remitting the tribute they collected to the royal treasury. These abuses gained further ground after the expedition of Kouli Khan; and matters were carried so far, that the emperor, who was unable to pay the Marattas what he owed them, authorised them, in 1740, to collect it in Bengal themselves,



These banditti, divided into three armies, ravaged this fine country for ten years together, and did not leave it till they had extorted immense sums.

DURING all these commotions, *Ancient manners the Indians still existing in the Bissenpour.* despotic government, which unhappily prevails throughout India, kept up its influence in Bengal; though a small district in the province that had preserved its independence, still continues to maintain it. This fortunate spot, which extends about a hundred and sixty miles, is called Bissenpour. It has been governed, time immemorial, by a bramin family of the tribe of Rajahputs. Here it is that the purity and equity of the ancient political system of the Indians is found unadulterated. This singular kind of government, the most beautiful and most interesting monument in the world, has hitherto been beholden with too much indifference. The only remains we have of ancient nations consist in monuments of brass and marble, which speak only to the imagination and to opinion, uncertain interpreters of manners and customs that no longer exist. Were a philosopher transported to Bissenpour, he would immediately be a witness of the life led by the first inhabitants of India many thousand years ago; he would converse with them; he would trace the progress of this nation, celebrated as it were from its very infancy; he would see the rise of a government, which being founded only on happy prejudices, on a simplicity and purity of manners, on the mildness of the people, and the integrity of the chiefs, has survived those innumerable systems of legislation, which have made only a transitory appearance upon the stage of the world with the generations they were destined to torment. More solid and durable than those political structures, which, raised by imposture and enthusiasm, are the scourges of mankind, and are doomed to perish with the extravagant opinions that gave them birth, the government of Bissenpour, the offspring of a just attention to order and the laws of nature, has been established and maintained upon unchangeable principles, and has undergone no more alteration than those principles themselves. The singular situation of this country has preserved to the inha-

bitants their primitive happiness and the gentleness of their character, by securing them from the danger of being conquered, or of imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow creatures. Nature has surrounded them with water; and they have only to open the sluices of their rivers in order to overflow the whole country. The armies sent to subdue them have so frequently been drowned that the plan of enslaving them has been laid aside; and the projectors of it have thought proper to content themselves with an appearance of submission.

Liberty and property are sacred in Bissenpour. Robbery, either public or private, is never heard of. As soon as any stranger enters the territory he comes under the protection of the laws, which provide for his security. He is furnished with guides at free cost, who conduct him from place to place, and are answerable for his person and effects. When he changes his conductors, the new ones deliver to those they relieve an attestation of their conduct, which is registered and afterwards sent to the raja. All the time he remains in the country he is maintained and conveyed with his merchandize, at the expence of the state, unless he desires leave to stay longer than three days in the same place. In that case he is obliged to defray his own expences, unless he is detained by any illness or other unavoidable accident. This beneficence to strangers is the consequence of the warmth with which the citizens espouse each other's interests. They are so far from entertaining a thought of doing an injury to each other, that whoever finds a purse, or other thing of value, hangs it upon the first tree he meets with, and informs the nearest guard, who give notice of it to the public by beat of drum. These maxims of probity are so generally received, that they direct even the operations of government. It receives annually between seven and eight millions [from 291,666l. 13s. 4d. to 333,333l. 6s. 8d.] without injury to agriculture or trade, and what is not wanted of this sum to supply the unavoidable expences of the state is laid out in improvements. The raja is enabled to engage in these humane employments, as he pays the moguls only what tribute he thinks proper, and at the times he chooses.

Readers, whose feeling hearts have been transported with joy at this description of the simplicity of the man-

ners and of the government of Bissenpour! you, who, tired with the vices and disorders prevailing in your own country, have undoubtedly frequently left it in imagination, in order to behold the virtue, and share the happiness, of this little corner of Bengal, it is with regret that I am now going to destroy, perhaps, this most agreeable illusion, and pour the bitter cup of melancholy in your hearts; but truth compels me. Alas! this Bissenpour, and all that I have been saying about it, is, perhaps, nothing more than a fable.

I understand—With sorrow you exclaim: A fable. What! is there nothing but the evil that can be said of man, that is possible to be true? His misery, or his wretchedness, are they the only circumstances that are incontestible? This being, born as he is for virtue, the principle of which he would in vain attempt to stifle, which he never counteracts without remorse, and which he is obliged to respect, even when it distresses or humiliates him: notwithstanding all these circumstances, this being is prone to wickedness, in every part of the globe. He is incessantly panting after happiness, founded upon the basis of his real duties, and yet he is unhappy everywhere. Everywhere he groans under the yoke of merciless rulers: everywhere he torments his equals, or is tormented by them; everywhere he is corrupted by education, and poisoned from his birth by prejudice; everywhere he is devoured by ambition, agitated with the love of glory, or tormented with the thirst of gold; while we are the sad victims of these fell executioners, who pursue us to the verge of the grave. Has vice then extended itself over the whole earth? Alas! let innocence be suffered at least to remain in this narrow spot, upon which our attention is fixed; and which our imagination, carrying us over the immense space that is between us, delighted to dwell upon.

Reader, I have experienced the same anxiety that you have. I have been led into the same reflections, when I found myself balanced between two authorities, almost of equal weight; the one for, the other against, the existence of Bissenpour. We have in our favour the testimony of an English traveller, who has resided thirty years in Bengal. The testimony on the other side is also that of a traveller of the same nation, who has likewise lived for a

considerable time in this country. Consider the matter, and make your own choice.

*Productions, &c.  
of Bengal.*

ALTHOUGH the rest of Bengal be far from enjoying the same felicity, be it real or fabulous, as Bissenpour, it is nevertheless the richest and most populous province in the whole empire. Besides its own consumption, which is necessarily considerable, its exports are immense. One part of its merchandize is carried into the inland country. Thibet takes off a quantity of its cottons, besides some iron and cloths of European manufacture. The inhabitants of those mountains fetch them from Patna themselves, and give musk and rhubarb in exchange.

Musk is a production peculiar to Thibet. It is contained in a small bag of the size of a hen's egg, which grows in the shape of a bladder under the belly of a species of goat, between the navel and the genitals. In its original state it is nothing more than putrid blood which coagulates in this bag. The largest bladder yields no more than half an ounce of musk. The smell of it is naturally so strong, that for common use, it is necessary to moderate it by mixing it with milder perfumes. The hunters, with a view of increasing their profits, contrived to take away part of the musk from the bladders, and to fill the vacuity with the liver and coagulated blood of the animal mixed together. The government, to put a stop to these fraudulent mixtures, ordered, that all the bladders, before they were sewed up, should be examined by inspectors, who should close them with their own hands, and seal them with the royal signet. This precaution has put a stop to the frauds practised to reduce the quality of the musk, but not to those which are calculated to increase the weight of it; they contrive to open the bags artfully and pour particles of lead into them.

The trade of Thibet is nothing in comparison of that which Bengal carries on with Agra, Delhi, and the provinces adjacent to those superb capitals, in salt, sugar, opium, silk, silk stuffs, an infinite quantity of cottons, and particularly muslins. These articles, taken together, amounted formerly to more than forty millions a year [1,666,666l. 13s. 4d.] So considerable a sum was not

conveyed to the banks of the Ganges ; but it was the means of retaining one nearly equal, which must have issued from thence to pay the duties, or for other purposes. Since the viceroys of the mogul have made themselves nearly independent, and send him no revenues but such as they choose to allow him, the luxury of the court is greatly abated, and the trade we have been speaking of is no longer so considerable.

The maritime trade of Bengal managed by the natives of the country, has not suffered the same diminution, nor was it ever so extensive, as the other. It may be divided into two branches, of which Catek is in possession of the greater part.

Catek is a district of some extent, a little below the most western mouth of the Ganges. Balasore, situated upon a navigable river, serves it for a port. The navigation to the Maldives, which the English and French have been obliged to abandon on account of the climate, is carried on entirely from this road. Here they load their vessels with rice, coarse cottons, and some silk stuffs for these islands, and receive cowries in exchange, which are used for money in Bengal, and are sold to the Europeans.

The inhabitants of Catek, and some other people of the lower Ganges, maintain a considerable correspondence with the country of Asham. This kingdom, which is thought to have formerly made a part of Bengal, and is only divided from it by a river that falls into the Ganges, deserves to be better known, if what is asserted be true, that gunpowder has been discovered there, and that the discovery was communicated from Asham to Pegu, and from Pegu to China. Its gold, silver, iron, and lead mines, would have added to its fame, if they had been properly worked. In the midst of these riches, which were of very little service to this kingdom, salt was an article of which the inhabitants were so much in want, that they were reduced to the expedient of procuring it from a decoction of certain plants.

In the beginning of the present century, some bramins of Bengal carried their superstitions to Asham, where the people were guided solely by the dictates of natural religion. The priests persuaded them, that it would be more agreeable to brama if they substituted the pure and whole-

some salt of the sea to that which they used. The sovereign consented to this, on condition that the exclusive trade should be in his hands, that it should only be brought by the people of Bengal, and that the boats laden with it should stop at the frontiers of his dominions. Thus have all these false religions been introduced by the influence, and for the advantage, of the priests who teach, and of the kings who admit them. Since this arrangement has taken place, forty vessels are annually sent from the Ganges to Asham, laden with salt, which yields near two hundred per cent. profit. They receive in payment a small quantity of gold and silver, ivory, musk, aloes-wood, gum-lac, and a large quantity of silk.

This silk, which is singular in its kind, requires no care; it is found on the trees where the silk worms are produced, nourished, and undergo their several metamorphoses. The inhabitants have no other trouble but that of collecting it. The neglected cods produce a new generation; during the growth of which, the tree puts forth new leaves, which serve successively for the nourishment of the young worms. These revolutions are repeated twelve times in a year, but do not produce so much in the rainy, as in the dry seasons. The stuffs made of this silk have a great deal of lustre, but do not last long.

Excepting these two branches of maritime trade, which for particular reasons, have been confined to the natives of the country, the people of Bengal have been deprived of all others by the Europeans, and it was impossible it should be otherwise. How could a weak, cautious, and oppressed, people, who sailed but slowly along the coasts, and with very small craft, successfully maintain a competition against these strangers of an enterprising character, enjoying particular privileges even on the Ganges, and in all other parts in bidding defiance to the tempestuous element upon their immense vessels? But in a country, where in general nothing is to be found necessary for the building of ships, the docks of Pegu are the only resource which has been thought of to supply this deficiency.

Pegu is situated in the gulf of Bengal, between the kingdoms of Arracan and Siam. Revolutions, which are so common in all the despotic empires of Asia, have been

here more frequently repeated than in any other. It has alternately been the centre of a great power, and a province to several states less extensive than itself. It is at present dependent upon Ava, where the Armenians alone buy up every thing that is furnished by Pegu, in topazes, sapphires, amethysts, and rubies.

The only port of Pngu that is open to strangers is Syriam. The Portuguese were a long time masters of it. It then displayed a degree of splendour, which vanished with the prosperities of that nation. It was revived, when the Europeans, settled at Bengal, thought of constructing there the numerous vessels which the extent of their maritime connections required: but it having been found that the materials employed there were of bad quality, it became necessary to give up this point, and the road fell again into obscurity. All the trade here at present is confined to the exchange of a few ordinary linens from the banks of the Ganges, or the coast of Coromandel, for wax, tin, and ivory.

A still more considerable branch of commerce, which the Europeans at Bengal carry on with the rest of India, is that of opium. Opium is the produce of the white poppy of the gardens, all the parts of which yield a milky juice. This plant, which perishes every year, has oblong and sinuate leaves, of a sea-green colour, alternately disposed upon a smooth stem, with very few branches, and three feet high. Each branch is almost naked, terminated by a single flower, rather large, composed of a calix with two leaves, four white or rose-coloured petals, and a great number of stamina, placed under the pistil, which they surround. The pistil grows into a large round seed-vessel, ornamented with a radiated crown, and filled with a prodigious number of round, white, and oily, seeds. When the poppy is full of sap, and that the head of it begins to swell, one or more incisions are made into it, from whence distil some drops of the milky liquor contained within, which is left to congeal, and is afterwards gathered. This operation is repeated three times; but the produce gradually diminishes in quantity, nor is it of so good a quality. When the opium is gathered, it is moistened and kneaded with water or honey, till it acquires the consistence, viscosity, and glossiness of pitch, when it

is well prepared, and is then made into small cakes. That kind is most in esteem which is rather soft, and yields to the touch, is inflammable, of a blackish-brown colour, and has a strong fetid smell; on the contrary, that which is dry, friable, burnt, and mixed with earth and sand, is to be thrown away. According to the different manner of preparing it, and the dozes in which it is given, it stupifies, excites agreeable ideas, or occasions madness.

The meconium, or common opium, is prepared by pressing the poppy heads that have been already cut. The juice which comes out of them, mixed with the least beautiful of the other drops is kneaded with water, and made into cakes, which are sent to Europe. As it is often adulterated, it is purified before it is used.

The province of Bahar is the country in the universe where the poppy is most cultivated. The fields are covered with it. Beside the opium which is carried into the inland parts, there are annually six hundred thousand pounds weight exported. This opium is not purified like that of Syria and Persia, which we make use of in Europe; it is only a paste that has undergone no preparation, and has not a tenth part of the virtue of the other.

An excessive fondness for opium prevails in all the countries to the east of India. In vain have the laws of China condemned to the flames every vessel that imports, and every house that receives it, the consumption is not the less considerable. It is still greater at Malacca, Borneo, the Moluccas, Java, Macassar, Sumatra, and all the islands of this immense archipelago. These islanders smoke it with their tobacco. Those who are desirous of attempting some desperate action, intoxicate themselves with this smoke. In this intoxication they fall upon the first object that presents itself: upon a man whom they have never seen, as well as upon their most implacable enemy. These atrocious acts have not convinced the Dutch, who are masters of the places where the opium has the most dangerous consequences, of the necessity of putting a stop to, or even restraining, the use of it. Rather than deprive themselves of the considerable profit they derived from the sale of it, they have authorised all the citizens to massacre



those who, being disordered with opium, appear in the streets armed. Thus it is that some systems of legislation introduce and keep up dangerous passions and opinions; and when once these have prevailed among the people, nothing can be thought of but death or tortures to put an end to them.

The English, who take as great a share in this odious commerce as they possibly can, have other branches more peculiar to themselves. They carry rice and sugar to the coast of Coromandel, for which they are paid with metals. They carry to Malabar linens, which they exchange for spices; and to Surat silks, which they barter for cotton. They carry rice, gum-lac, and linens, to the Persian gulf, from whence they receive dried fruits, rose-water, and especially gold. They carry rich and various cargoes to the Red sea, which furnishes little else than silver. These several connections with the different parts of India, bring in annually to Bengal from five and twenty to thirty millions of livres [from 1,041,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* to 1,250,000*l.*].

Though this trade passes through the hands of the Europeans, and is carried on under their protection, it is not entirely on their own account. The moguls, indeed, who are usually confined to the places they hold under the government, have seldom any concern in these expeditions; but the Armenians, who, since the revolutions in Persia, are settled upon the banks of the Ganges, to which they formerly only made voyages, readily throw their capitals into this trade. The Indians employ still larger sums in it. The impossibility of enjoying their fortunes under an oppressive government, does not deter the natives of this country from labouring incessantly to increase them. As they would run too great a risk by engaging openly in trade, they are obliged to have recourse to clandestine methods. As soon as an European arrives, the Gentoos, who know mankind better than is commonly supposed, study his character: and if they find them frugal, active, and well informed, offer to act as his brokers and cashiers, and lend or procure him money upon bottomry, or at interest. This interest, which is usually nine per cent. at least, is higher when he is under the necessity of borrowing of the Cheyks.

These Cheyks are a family of Indians, possessed of great power, who have, from time immemorial, lived on the banks of the Ganges. Their riches have long ago procured them the management of the bank belonging to the court, the farming of the public revenue, and the direction of the money, which they coin afresh every year, in order to receive annually the benefit arising from the mint. By uniting so many advantages, they are enabled to lend the government forty, [1,666,666l. 13s. 4d.] sixty, [2,500,000l.] or even a hundred millions [4,166,666l. 13s. 4d.] at a time. When the government finds it impossible to refund the money, or will not do it, the Cheyks are allowed to indemnify themselves by oppressing the people. That so prodigious a capital should be preserved in the centre of tyranny, and in the midst of revolutions, appears incredible. It is not possible to conceive how such a structure could be raised, much less how it could be supported for so long a time. To explain this mystery, it must be observed, that this family has always maintained a superior influence at the court of Delhi; that the nabobs and rajahs in Bengal are dependent upon it; that those who are about the person of the subah have constantly been its creatures; and that the subah himself has been maintained or dethroned by the intrigues of this family. To this we may add, that the different branches of it, and the wealth belonging to them, being dispersed, it has never been possible to do them so much mischief, but that they have been always left with more resources than were necessary to enable them to pursue their revenge to the utmost extreme. Their despotism extended itself even over the Europeans who had settled factories in this country; and who indeed presented themselves to the yoke, by borrowing of these rapacious financiers immense sums, at the apparent interest of ten per cent, but in effect, of more than twelve, from the difference there was between the money they received, and that which they had to return.

The Portuguese, who landed at Bengal a long time before the other navigators of Europe, formed a settlement at Chatigan, a port situated upon the frontier of Arracan, not far from the most eastern branch of the Ganges. The Dutch, who, without incurring the resentment of an ene-

my at that time so formidable, were desirous of sharing in their good fortune, were engaged in searching for a port, which, without obstructing their plan, would expose them the least to hostilities. In 1603, their attention was directed to Balasore; and all their rivals, rather through imitation than in consequence of any well-concerted schemes, followed their example. Experience taught these merchants the propriety of fixing as near as possible to the different markets from whence their rich cargoes came; and they sailed up that branch of the Ganges, which, after having separated itself from the main river at Mourcha, falls into the sea, under the name of the river Hughley. The government of the country permitted them to erect warehouses wherever there was plenty of manufactures; and it even very imprudently allowed the liberty of erecting fortifications upon the banks of the river.

On going up the river, we first meet with the English settlement at Calcutta, where the air is unwholesome, and the anchorage unsafe. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, this town, to which liberty and security had successively attracted many rich Armenian, Moorish, and Indian merchants, has increased its population in later times to six hundred thousand souls. On the land side, it would be entirely open to the enemy, if there were any there, or if they were to be feared: but Fort William, which is only at the distance of half a mile, would defend it against any forces sent from Europe to attack or bombard it. It is a regular octagon, with eight bastions, several counter-guards, and some half-moons, without either a glacis or covered-way. The ditch of this place, which has cost more than twenty millions [833,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*] may be about one hundred and sixty feet wide, and eighteen feet deep.

Six leagues higher is situated Frederick Nagore, founded by the Danes in 1756, in order to supply the place of an ancient settlement where they had not been able to maintain their ground. This new establishment has not yet acquired any importance; and there is all the reason imaginable to believe, that it will never become considerable.

Chandernagore, which lies two leagues and an half higher, belongs to the French. It has the disadvantage

of being somewhat exposed on the western side; but its harbour is excellent, and the air is as pure as it can be on the banks of the Ganges. Whenever any building is undertaken that requires strength, it must here, as well as in all other parts of Bengal, be built upon piles; it being impossible to dig to three or four feet deep without coming at water. We find upon this district, which is hardly a league in circumference, some few manufacturers, whom persecution has driven here, as into the other European factories.

At the distance of a mile from Chandernagore, is Chinsura, better known by the name of Hughley, being situated near the suburbs of that anciently renowned city. The Dutch have no other possessions there, but merely their fort; the territory round it depending on the government of the country, which hath frequently made it feel its power by its extortions. Another inconvenience attending this settlement is a sand-bank that prevents ships from coming up to it: they proceed no farther than Tulta, which is twenty miles below Calcutta; and this, of course, occasions an additional expence to the government.

The Portuguese had formerly made Bandel, which is eighty leagues from the mouth of the Ganges, and a quarter of a league above Hughely, the principal seat of their commerce. Their flag is still displayed, and there are a few unhappy wretches remaining there, who have forgotten their country, after having been forgotten by it.

Except in the months of October, November, and December, when the frequent and almost continued hurricanes render the gulf of Bengal impracticable, European ships may enter the Ganges during the remainder of the year. Those that design to go up the river, previously touch at Point Palmiras, where they are received by pilots of their own nation, who reside at Balasore. The money they convey is put on board some sloops, called bots, of between sixty and a hundred tons burthen, which always precede the ships. The passage into the river Hughley lies through a narrow strait between two sand banks. The ships used formerly to come to an anchor at Culp; but time has worn off the dread of those currents, quicksands,

and shoals, that seemed to choke up the navigation of the river, and the ships have been brought up to their respective places of destination. This boldness has occasioned many shipwrecks; but in proportion as more experience has been gained, and the spirit of observation has been carried further, accidents of that kind have been less frequent. It is to be hoped, that the example of Admiral Watson, who sailed as high as Chandernagore in a seventy-gun ship, will not be forgotten; as a proper attention to it would save a great deal of time, trouble, and expence.

Beside this great channel, there is another, by which goods may be brought from the places which furnish them, to the principal settlement of each company. For this purpose, a number of small fleets are employed, consisting of eighty or a hundred vessels, and sometimes more. These are manned with black or white soldiers, in order to check the insatiable avarice of the nabobs and rajahs they meet with in their passage. The goods purchased in the higher parts of the Ganges, at Patna and Cassimbuzar, are carried down the river Hughley: those purchased near the other branches of the Ganges, which are all navigable in the interior parts of the country, and communicate with each other, especially towards the lower division of that river, are conveyed into the Hughley by Rangasoula and Baratola, about fifteen or twenty leagues from the sea. From thence they are carried up the stream to the principal settlement belonging to each nation.

The exports from Bengal to Europe consist of musk, gum-lac, nicaragua-wood, pepper, cowries, and some other articles of less importance brought thither from other places. Those that are the immediate produce of the country are borax, saltpetre, silk, silk stuffs, muslins, and several different sorts of cottons.

The borax, which is found in the province of Patna, is a saline substance, which the chemists in Europe have in vain attempted to counterfeit. Some of them consider it as an alkaline salt, which is found completely formed in the rich country of Indostan; others will have it to be the produce of volcanoes, or subterraneous fires.

Be this as it may, the borax is of great use in the

working of metals, by facilitating their fusion and purification. This substance being quickly vitrified by the action of fire, attracts the heterogeneous particles that are intermixed with these metals, and reduces them to dross. The borax is likewise absolutely necessary in the assaying of ores, and the soldering of metals. The Dutch alone have the secret of refining it, which is said to have been communicated to them by some Venetian families that came to seek that liberty in the United provinces which they did not enjoy under the tyranny of their own aristocratical government.

Saltpetre is likewise the produce of Patna. It is extracted from a clay, which is either black, whitish, or red. The manner of refining it is by digging a large pit, in which the nitrous earth is deposited, and diluted with a quantity of water, which is kept stirred till it comes to a consistency. The water having drawn out all the salts, and the grosser parts subsiding at the bottom, the more fluid particles are taken out and put into another pit not so large as the former. This substance having undergone a second purification the clear water that swims on the top, and is totally impregnated with nitre, is taken off, and boiled in caldrons; it is skimmed while it is boiling, and in a few hours a nitrous salt is obtained infinitely superior to any that is found elsewhere. The Europeans export about ten millions of pounds for the use of their settlements in Asia, or for home consumption in their respective countries. It is bought upon the spot for three shillings a pound [ $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.] at the most; and is sold again to us for ten [5d.] at the least.

Cassimbuzar, which is grown rich by the ruin of Malda and Rajamahall, is the general market for Bengal silk, the greatest part of which is supplied from that territory. The silk-worms are brought up and fed there in the same manner as in other places; but the heat of the climate hatches them, and brings them to perfection at all times of the year. A great many stuffs, made entirely of silk, or of silk and cotton mixed, are manufactured here. The first of these are mostly consumed at Delhi, or in our northern regions, the rest in several countries of Asia. With regard to the unwrought silk, the quantity consumed in the European manufacture may be estimated at

three or four hundred pounds weight : but for a few years past, the English carry away great quantities of it for their own use, and that of other nations ; it is in general a very common sort, ill twisted, and takes no gloss in dying. It is of little use except for the woof in brocades.

Cotton is brought to much greater perfection : it is fit for every thing ; and is usefully employed in a variety of different manufactures, which are consumed over the whole globe. That for which there is the most universal demand, and which more particularly comes from Bengal, is plain, striped, or worked, muslin. It is easily manufactured in the rainy season, because then, the materials are more flexible, and do not break so readily. The weavers, during the rest of the year, supply, as much as possible, this moisture in the air, by vessels full of water, which they take care to put under their looms.

Although the manufactures in which the cottons are prepared are dispersed throughout the greatest part of Bengal, Dacca may be considered as the general market of them. Till of late, Delhi and Muxadavad were furnished from thence with the cottons wanted for their own consumption. They each of them maintained an agent on the spot to superintend the manufacture of them ; who has an authority independent of the magistrate over all the workmen, whose business has any relation to the object of his commission. It was a misfortune to them to appear too dexterous, because they were then forced to work only for the government, which paid them ill, and kept them in a sort of captivity. When the caprices of tyranny were satisfied, Europeans, other strangers, and natives, were allowed to begin their purchases : but still they were obliged to employ brokers established by the ministry, and as corrupt as they were. These restraints and rigours put an end to industry, the child of necessity but the companion of liberty.

The revolutions which have given new sovereigns to Bengal ought to have introduced other maxims. Nevertheless, we do not see that the works that come from thence are more perfect than they were before that period. It is possible that those who fabricate them may not really have experienced any change of condition. When

they ceased to be the slaves of their nabobs, they fell perhaps under a yoke equally oppressive.

All the purchases made in Bengal by the European nations, amounted, a few years ago, to no more than 20,000,000 of livres [833,333l. 6s. 8d.] One-third of this sum was paid in iron, lead, copper, wollens, and Dutch spices: the remainder was discharged in money. Since the English have made themselves masters of this rich country its exports have been increased, and its imports diminished, because the conquerers have carried away a greater quantity of merchandize, and have paid for it out of the revenues they receive from the country. There is reason to believe, that this revolution in the trade of Bengal has not arrived at its crisis, and that sooner or later it will be attended with more important consequences and effects.

*English settle-ment at St. Helena.* To maintain their intercourse with this vast country, and their other Asiatic settlements, the English company have fixed upon St. Helena as a place of refreshment.

This island, which is only twenty-eight miles in circumference, is situated in the middle of the Atlantic ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from the coast of Africa, and six hundred from that of America. It is an irregular mass of rocks and mountains, where at every step we meet with evident traces of an extinguished volcano. It was discovered in 1602 by the Portuguese, who paid no attention to it. The Dutch afterwards formed a small settlement upon the island, which they were dispossessed of by the English, who have been fixed there ever since the year 1673.

Upon this barren and wild soil, a population has gradually been formed, of twenty thousand souls, freemen or slaves. Here, as well as at the Cape of Good Hope, the number of females born exceeds greatly that of males. If it were proved, by accurate calculations, that the process of nature is the same in all hot countries, this information would account for the public manners, and the private customs, of the people that dwell there.

None of the fruit trees exported from our climates to St. Helena have succeeded, except the peach tree. The



vine has not prospered there ; and the vegetables have been constantly devoured by insects ; while a small quantity only of the corn is preserved from the attacks of the mice. The breeding of horned cattle has been the only resource ; and it is even only after the loss of a great number, that the propagation has been successful.

The climate destroyed every species of seed that was sown by the cultivator. The idea was then suggested of planting shrubs, which could neither be injured by the heat, nor by the dryness of the soil ; and under their shade a fresh and wholesome green food made its appearance. This grass, however, has never been able to feed more than three thousand oxen at a time ; a number insufficient for the wants of the inhabitants, and of the navigators. This deficiency might perhaps be supplied, by having recourse to artificial meadows, which intelligent travellers believe to be practicable in the present state of things. But this plan will not be easily pursued, unless the mother-country should make a sacrifice of the best lands, which have been apparently reserved for its service, although in reality they are only kept for the advantage or the caprices of its agents.

The houses that surround the harbour, scattered, as it were, by the hand of chance, gave the idea rather of a camp than of a town. The fortifications that surround them are inconsiderable ; and the garrison appointed to defend them, consists only of five hundred soldiers, all dissatisfied with their situation. The colony has but few refreshments, and some oxen to give to the ships, in exchange for the provisions and merchandize they bring from Europe and Asia. Accordingly, fish is the ordinary food of the blacks there, and makes great part of the nourishment of the white men.

Such is, according to the strictest truth, the state of St. Helena, where the ships put in on their return from India to England, and where, in time of war, they find a convoy. The outward-bound ships are even repulsed from thence by the winds and currents. To avoid the inconveniences attending so long a voyage, made without stopping, several of them put in at the Cape of Good Hope ; the rest, particularly those which are destined for the Malabar coast, take in refreshments at the islands of Comora.

*Islands of Comora.*

THESE islands, that lie in the Mozambique channel, between the coast of Zanguebar and Madagascar, are four in number: Comora, the principal one, from which this small archipelago takes its name, is little known. The Portuguese, who discovered it in the course of their first expeditions, brought the name of Europeans into such detestation by their cruelties, that all who have since ventured to go on shore there, have either been massacred, or very ill treated. It has accordingly been quite forsaken. The islands of Mayota and Moely are not more frequented, on account of the difficulty of approaching them, and the want of a safe anchorage. The English vessels put in at the island of Joanna.

Here it is, that, within the compass of thirty leagues, nature displays all her riches, with all her simplicity. Hills that are ever green, and valleys that are always gay, everywhere present a variety of delightful landscapes. Thirty-thousand inhabitants, distributed into seventy-three villages, share its productions. They speak the Arabic language, and their religion is a very corrupt sort of mohammedism; their moral principles are more refined than they usually are in this part of the globe. The habit they have contracted of living upon milk and vegetables has given them an unconquerable aversion for labour. This laziness is the cause of a particular air of consequence, which consists, among persons of distinction, in suffering the nails to grow to an immoderate length. In order that this negligence may have the appearance of beauty, they tinge their nails with a yellowish red, which they extract from a shrub.

These people, born to be indolent, have lost that liberty which they doubtless came hither to enjoy from a neighbouring continent, of which they were the original inhabitants. An Arabian trader, not quite a century ago, having killed a Portuguese gentleman at Mozambique, threw himself into a boat, which chance conducted to Joanna. This stranger made such good use of his superior abilities, and the assistance of a few of his countrymen, that he acquired an absolute authority, which is still maintained by his grandson. The change in the government did not in the least diminish the liberty and security enjoyed by the English, who landed upon the island. They continued to put their sick on shore without molest-

ation, where the wholesomeness of the air, the excellence of the fruits, provisions, and water, soon restored them to health. They were only obliged to give a higher price for the provisions they wanted, for which the following reasons may be assigned :

The Arabians having been induced to frequent an island governed by an Arab, have brought the Indian manufactures into vogue ; and as the cowries, cocoa nuts, and other commodities they received in exchange, were not sufficient to defray the expence of this article of luxury, the islanders have been obliged to demand money for their goats and poultry, which they before exchanged for glass beads, and other trifles of as little value. This innovation has not, however, made the English desert a place of refreshment, which has no other inconvenience than that of being at too great a distance from our latitudes.

A similar inconvenience did not *The English leave* prevent the English company from *the country trade* extending their trade very considerably. *to private adventurers.* The intercourse carried on between one port of India and another was too confined, and of too little consequence to engage their attention for any length of time. They were soon sufficiently enlightened to perceive that it was not for their interest to continue this kind of commerce. Their agents undertook it, with the consent of the company, upon their own account ; and all the English were invited to share it, upon condition of entering into a bond for 45,000 livres [1875l.] as a security for their good behaviour. To facilitate and hasten the prosperity which was one day to increase their own, the company encouraged these traders, by taking a share in their expeditions, and by giving them an interest in their own fleets, and frequently even undertaking to be the carriers of their merchandize at a low freight. This generous behaviour, resulting from a national spirit, and so diametrically opposite to the spirit of monopoly, soon gave activity, strength, and credit, to the English settlements.

Private trade has increased with the prosperities of the power that supports it, and has contributed in its turn to give that power more solidity. It employs at present

three considerable capitals, and about two hundred vessels, from fifty to two hundred tons burden, which have all Indian sailors on board. The number of them would still have been increased, if the company had not exacted, in all its factories, a tax of five per cent. on all articles of free trade, and one of eight and a half per cent. on all remittances which the agents of this traffic wished to make to the mother-country. When their necessities did not compel them to remit part of these unreasonable demands, these particular funds were given up to other European merchants, or to English officers, who, not being strictly dependent upon the company, could traffic for themselves in the voyages they undertook for them.

*Restraints in the company's trade, &c.* IF individuals were oppressed by the mother-country, that was confined in its turn by the regulations of the treasury. The ships of the company were

always to return into an English port; and those which brought prohibited merchandize, to London. By a singular regulation, unworthy of a commercial people, and which it has always been found necessary to break through, they were allowed to send into India no more than 6,750,000 livres [281,250*l.*] in money. They were obliged to export in merchandize of the country, to ten times the value of what they sent in specie. All the productions of Asia that were consumed by the nation were to pay five-and-twenty per cent. to the public treasury, and some a great deal more.

Although the ignorance, or the capacity of the different administrators; the events of peace and war; the prosperity or the misfortunes of the mother-country; the greater or less demand for Indian manufactures in Europe; and the degree of competition experienced from other nations,—may have had considerable influence on the number and utility of the company's expeditions, yet it may be said that their commerce has been more extensive and prosperous in proportion to the increase of their capital. At first it consisted only of 1,620,000 livres [67,500*l.*] This trifling fund was gradually increased by that share of the profits that was not subject to a dividend, and by the sums, more or less considerable, thrown in by new

proprietors. It had arisen to 8,322,547 livres ten sols [346,772l. 16s. 3d.], when, in 1676, the directors thought it better to double it than to order an immense dividend, which their success enabled them to make. This capital continued increasing till the two companies that had so obstinately opposed each other, threw their wealth, their plans, and their expectations, into one common stock. It has since risen to 67,500,000 livres [2,812,500l.] With this capital the provisions and merchandize which India furnishes in so great abundance were bought. These were consumed in Great Britain, in its African factories, in its colonies of the new world, and in several parts of Europe. In process of time tea became one of the great objects of this trade.

This herb was introduced into England by the lords Arlington and Ossory, who imported it from Holland in 1666, and their ladies brought it into fashion among people of their own rank. At that time it sold in London for near seventy livres [2l. 18s. 4d.] a pound, though it cost but three or four [from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 4d.] at Batavia. Notwithstanding the price was kept up with very little variation, the taste for this liquor gained ground; it was not, however, brought into common use till towards the year 1715, when green tea began to be drunk, whereas till then no sort was known but the bohea. The fondness for this Asiatic plant has since become universal. Perhaps the frenzy is not without its inconveniences; but it cannot be denied that it has contributed more to the sobriety of the nation than the severest laws, the most eloquent harangues of Christian orators, or the best treatises of morality.

In 1766, six millions of pounds of tea were brought from China by the English, four millions five hundred thousand by the Dutch, two millions four hundred thousand by the Swedes, the same quantity by the Danes, and two millions one hundred thousand by the French. The whole of these quantities amounted to seventeen millions four hundred thousand pounds. The preference given by most nations to chocolate, coffee, and other liquors, joined to a series of observations carefully pursued for several years, and the most exact calculations that can possibly be made in such complicated cases, inclines us to think

that the whole consumption throughout Europe did not exceed, at that period, five millions four hundred thousand pounds. In this case, that of Great Britain must have been of twelve millions.

It is universally allowed that there are at least two millions of people in the mother-country, and a million in the colonies, which constantly drink tea. Each individual consumed about four pounds in a year; and each pound, including the taxes, was sold, one with another, for six livres ten sols [5s. 5d.] According to this calculation, the price of this commodity must have amounted to seventy-two millions of livres [3,000,000l.]; but this was not exactly the case, because half the quantity was smuggled, and therefore cost the nation much less.

The war between Great Britain and North America has obliged the company to diminish its imports of tea. But this circumstance has not affected their trade. The deficiency has been supplied by a greater quantity of silks furnished by China and Bengal, and by the increase they have given to the sales they commonly used to make of the productions and manufactures of Coromandel and Malabar. Their chief resource, however, has been the conquest of Bengal, an event rather of a recent date.

*Conquest of Bengal.*

SHOULD it be asked, whether this astonishing revolution, which has had so sensible an influence both upon the fate of the inhabitants of this part of Asia, and upon the trade of the European nations in these climates, hath been the consequence and result of a series of political combinations; or whether it be one of those events of which prudence has a right to boast? we shall answer in the negative. Chance alone has determined it; and the circumstances that have opened this field of glory and power to the English, far from promising them the success they have had, seemed on the contrary to threaten them with the most fatal reverse of fortune.

A pernicious custom had for some time prevailed in these countries. The governors of all the European settlements took upon them to grant an asylum to such of the natives of the country as were afraid of oppression or punishment. As they received very considerable sums in

return for their protection, they overlooked the danger to which the interests of their principals were exposed by this proceeding. One of the chief officers of Bengal, who was apprised of this resource, took refuge among the English at Calcutta, to avoid the punishment due to his treachery. He was taken under their protection. The subah, justly irritated, put himself at the head of his army, attacked the place, and took it. He threw the garrison into a close dungeon, where they were suffocated in the space of twelve hours. Three-and-twenty of them only remained alive. These wretched people offered large sums to the keeper of their prison, to prevail upon him to get their deplorable situation represented to the prince. Their cries and lamentations were sufficient informations to the people, who were touched with compassion; but no one would venture to address the despotic monarch upon the subject. The expiring English were told that he was ASLEEP; and there was not, perhaps, a single person in Bengal who thought that the tyrant's slumbers should be interrupted for one moment, even to preserve the lives of one hundred and fifty unfortunate men.

What then is a tyrant? Or rather, what are a people accustomed to the yoke of tyranny? Is it respect or fear that makes them bend under it? If it be fear, the tyrant then is more formidable than God, to whom man addresses his prayers, or his complaints, at all times of the night, or at every hour of the day. If it be respect, mankind may then be brought even to revere the authors of their misery, a prodigy which superstition alone could accomplish. Which is it that astonishes us most; the ferocity of the nabob who sleeps, or the meanness of him who dares not awake him!

Admiral Watson, who was just arrived in India with his squadron, and Colonel Clive, who had so remarkably distinguished himself in the war of the Carnatic, did not delay to avenge the cause of their country. They collected the English who had been dispersed, and were flying from place to place; they went up the Ganges in the month of December 1756, retook Calcutta, made themselves masters of several other places, and gained a complete victory over the subah.

A success so rapid and extensive becomes in a manner  
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inconceivable, when we consider that it was only with a body of five hundred men that the English were acting against the whole force of Bengal. But if their superiority was partly owing to their better discipline, and to other evident advantages that the Europeans have in battle over the Indian powers; the ambition of eastern chiefs, the avarice of their ministers, and the nature of a government which has no other springs but those of the interest of the moment, and fear, were of still more effectual service to them; they availed themselves of the concurrence of these several circumstances in this first, as well as in every succeeding, enterprize. The subah was detested by all his people, as tyrants generally are; the principal officers sold their interest to the English; he was betrayed at the head of his army, the greater part of which refused to engage; and he himself fell into the hands of his enemies, who caused him to be strangled in prison.

They disposed of the subahship in favour of Jaffier-Ally-Khan, the ringleader of the conspiracy, who ceded to the company some provinces, with a grant of every privilege, exemption, and favour, to which they could have any pretension. But soon growing weary of the yoke he had imposed upon himself, he was secretly contriving the means to free himself from it. His designs were discovered, and he was taken prisoner in the centre of his own capital.

Cosim-Ally-Khan, his son-in-law, was proclaimed in his stead. He had purchased this usurpation with immense sums; but he did not enjoy it long. Impatient of the yoke, as his predecessor had been, he gave some tokens of his disposition, and refused to submit to the laws the company imposed upon him. The war immediately broke out again. The same Jaffier-Ally-Khan, whom the English kept in confinement, was again proclaimed subah of Bengal. They marched against Cosim-Ally-Khan. His general officers were corrupted: he was betrayed and entirely defeated; too happy, that while he lost his dominions, he still preserved the immense treasures he had amassed.

Notwithstanding this revolution, Cosim-Ally, did not forego his hopes of vengeance. Fired with resentment, he went, with all his riches, to the nabob of Benares,



chief vizir of the mogul empire. This nabob, and all the neighbouring princes, united themselves against the common enemy : but the contest at present was not with a handful of Europeans from the coast of Coromandel, but with all the forces of Bengal, of which the English were masters. Elated with their success, they did not wait to be attacked ; they marched immediately to oppose this formidable league ; and they marched with that confidence which Clive inspired them with ; a leader, whose name seemed to have become the pledge of victory. Clive, however, would not hazard an engagement. Part of the campaign was spent in negotiations ; but at length the treasures which the English had already drawn from Bengal served to ensure them new conquests. The heads of the Indian army were corrupted ; and, when the nabob of Bennesar was desirous of coming to action, he was obliged to fly with his men, without ever being able to engage.

By this victory, the country of Bennesar fell into the hands of the English : and it seemed as if nothing could hinder them from annexing that sovereignty to that of Bengal : but, either from motives of moderation or prudence, they were content to levy eight millions [333,333]. 6s. 8d.] by contribution : and they offered peace to the nabob on conditions which would render him incapable of doing them any injury : but, such as they were, he most readily agreed to them, that he might regain the possession of his dominions.

In the midst of these calamities, Cossim-Ally-Khan still found means to preserve part of his treasures, and retired to the Seiks, a people situated in the neighbourhood of Delhi, from whence he made an attempt to procure some allies, and to raise up enemies against the English.

While these things were passing in Bengal, the mogul emperor having been driven from Delhi by the Pattans, who had proclaimed his son in his room, was wandering from one province to another in search of a place of refuge in his own territories, and vainly requesting succour from his own vassals. Abandoned by his subjects, betrayed by his allies, without support, and without an army, he was struck by the power of the English, and implored their protection. They promised to conduct him to Delhi,

and reinstate him on his throne ; but they insisted that he should previously cede to them the absolute sovereignty over Bengal. This cession was made by an authentic act, and attended with all the formalities usually practised throughout the mogul empire.

The English, possessed of this title, which was to give a kind of legitimacy to their usurpation in the eyes of the people, soon forgot the promises they had made. They gave the mogul to understand, that particular circumstances would not suffer them to engage in such an enterprise ; that they must wait for more favourable times ; and they assigned him a place of residence, and a revenue to subsist upon. The mogul empire was then divided between two emperors ; one acknowledged in the several districts of India, where the English company had any establishments and authority ; the other in the provinces bordering on Delhi, and in those parts to which the influence of that company did not extend.

The English thus become sovereigns of Bengal, have thought it incumbent on them to keep up the shadow of ancient forms, in a country, where they are the greatest, and, perhaps, the only power, that is likely to be secure and lasting. They governed the kingdom, and received the revenues of it, under the name of a subah, who, while he was at their disposal, and in their pay, seemed to give his own orders. It is from him that all the public acts and decrees, which had really been deliberated in the council of Calcutta, appeared to proceed ; so that the people, notwithstanding their change of masters, have for a considerable time been induced to believe, that they were still under the same yoke.

Strange indignity, to wish to exercise oppression, without appearing unjust ; to be desirous of reaping the fruits of one's rapine, and to throw the odium of it upon another. Not to blush at acts of tyranny, and yet to blush at the name of tyrant. How wicked is man, and how much more flagitious would he be, if he could be convinced that his crimes would remain unknown, and that the punishment or ignominy of them would fall upon an innocent person !

The conquest of Bengal, the boundaries of which have since that period been extended, as far as that heap of

mountains which separate the Thibet and Tartary from Indostan, without making any essential alteration in the external form of the English company, has produced a material change in the object of it. They are no longer a commercial society, they are a territorial power which make the most of their revenues, by the assistance of a traffic that formerly was their sole existence, and which, notwithstanding the extension it has received, is no more than an accessory in the various combinations of their present real grandeur.

THE arrangements intended to give *Measures of the* stability to a situation so prosperous, are, *English to keep* perhaps, the most reasonable that can *Bengal.* be. England has at present in India an establishment to the amount of nine thousand eight hundred European troops, and fifty-four thousand sipahis, well paid, well armed, and well disciplined. Three thousand of these Europeans, and twenty-five thousand sipahis are dispersed along the borders of the Ganges.

The most considerable body of these troops has been stationed at Bennares, once the source of Indian science, and still the most famous academy of these rich countries, where European avarice pays no respect to any thing. This situation has been chosen, because it appeared favourable for stopping the progress of those warlike people, who might descend from the mountains of the north; and in case of attack, the maintaining of a war in a foreign territory would be less ruinous than in the countries of which the company is to receive the revenues. On the south, as far as it has been found practicable, they have occupied all the narrow passes by which an enterprising and active enemy might attempt to penetrate into the province. Decca, which is in the centre of it, has under its walls a considerable force always ready to march wherever its presence may be necessary. All the nabobs and rajahs who are dependent on the subahship of Bengal, are disarmed, surrounded by spies, in order to discover their conspiracies, and by troops to render them ineffectual.

In case of any unfortunate revolution which might oblige the victorious power to change its situation, and abandon its posts, the English have constructed a fort near

Calcutta, called Fort William, which, in times of urgent necessity, would serve as a place of refuge for the army, should they be forced to retreat, and give time to wait for the necessary reinforcements for the recovery of their superiority.

Notwithstanding the wise precautions taken by the English, they are not, and cannot be, without apprehensions. The mogul power may gain strength, and wish to rescue one of its finest provinces out of the hands of a foreign oppressor. They have reason to fear that the barbarous nations may be again attracted by the softness of the climate. The princes now at variance may, perhaps, put an end to their contests, and reunite in favour of their common liberty. It is not impossible but that the Indians, who at present constitute the chief force of the victorious English, may one day turn against them those arms of which they have taught them the use. Their grandeur, which is but imaginary, may, perhaps, moulder away without their being actually driven from what they possess. It is well known that the Marattas have always their attention fixed upon this beautiful country, and are constantly threatening it with invasion. Unless the English are successful enough, either by bribery or intrigue, to divert this dangerous storm, Bengal will be the object of their pillage and rapine, whatever measures may be taken to oppose a light cavalry, the alertness of which exceeds every thing that can be said of it. The incursions of these plunderers may be repeated; and then the company will have less tribute to receive, and their expences will be increased.

Supposing, however, that none of the misfortunes we have ventured to foresee, should take place, is it likely that the revenues of Bengal, which in 1773 arose to 71,004,465 livres [2,958,519l. 7s. 6d.] but of which 61,379,437 livres ten sols [2,557,476l. 11s. 3d.] have been absorbed by plunder, or the necessary expences, should always continue the same? This is, at least, a matter of doubt. The English company no longer export any coin, but even carry away some for the use of their factories. Their agents make incredible fortunes, and the private merchants considerable ones, which they go to the mother-country to enjoy. The other European nations

find in the treasures of this ruling power accommodations, which make it unnecessary to introduce new bullion. Must not all these combined circumstances necessarily occasion a deficiency in the finances of those countries, a void which will, sooner or later, be perceived in the making up of the public accounts?

That period might indeed be protracted, if the English, respecting the rights of humanity, were at length to deliver those countries from the oppression under which they have continued to groan for so many ages. Then Calcutta, far from being an object of terror to the Indians, would become a tribunal always open to the complaints of those unhappy sufferers whom tyranny should dare to molest. Property would be holden so sacred, that the treasure, which for so many years has been buried, would be taken out of the bowels of the earth, to serve the purpose of its destination. Agriculture and manufactures would be encouraged to such a degree, that the exports would become from day to day more considerable; and the company, by following such maxims as these, instead of being driven to the necessity of lessening the tributes which they found established, might possibly find means to bring about an augmentation consistent with the general satisfaction of the natives. Let it not be said that such a plan is chimerical. The English company itself has already proved the possibility of it.

Most of the European nations that have acquired any territory in India, generally choose for their farmers the natives of the country, from whom they exact such considerable sums in advance, that in order to pay them, they are obliged to borrow at an exorbitant interest. The distress which these greedy farmers voluntarily bring on themselves, obliges them to exact of the inhabitants, to whom they let some parcels of the land below their value, so considerable a rent, that these unfortunate persons quit their villages, and abandon them forever. The contractor, ruined by this incident, which renders him insolvent, is dismissed to make room for a successor, who commonly meets with the same fate; so that it very frequently happens, that nothing but the first sum deposited, or very little more, is ever received.

Different measures have been pursued in the English

colonies on the coast of Coromandel. It was observed that the villages had been formed by several families, who, for the most part, were connected with each other; this has been the reason why the custom of employing farmers has been abolished. Every land was taxed at a certain annual rent, and the head of the family was security for his relations and connections. This method united the colonists one with another, and created in them a disposition, as well as the power, of affording each other a reciprocal support. This has occasioned the settlements of that nation to rise to the utmost degree of prosperity they were capable of attaining; while those of her rivals were languishing for want of cultivation and manufactures, and consequently of population.

Why must a mode of conduct, which does so much honour to reason and humanity, be confined to the small territory of Madras? Can it be true that moderation is a virtue that belongs only to a state of mediocrity? The English company, till these latter times, had always holden a conduct superior to that of the other companies. Their agents, their factors, were well chosen. The most part of them were young men of good families, who were not afraid, when the service of their country called upon them, to cross those immense seas which England considers as a part of her empire. The company had generally taken their commerce in a great point of view, and had almost always carried it on like an association of true politicians as well as a body of merchants. Upon the whole, their planters, merchants, and soldiers, had preserved more honesty, more regularity, and more firmness, than those of the other nations.

*Oppressions of the English in Bengal.*

Who would ever have imagined that this same company, by a sudden alteration of conduct, and change of system, could possibly make the people of Bengal regret the despotism of their ancient masters? That fatal revolution has been but too sudden and too real. A settled plan of tyranny has taken the place of authority occasionally exerted. The exactions are become general and fixed, the oppression continual and absolute. The destructive arts of monopolies have been improved, and

new ones have been invented. In a word, the company have tainted and corrupted the public sources of confidence and happiness.

Under the government of the mogul emperors, the subahs, who had the care of the revenues, were, from the nature of the business, obliged to leave the receipt of them to nabobs, polygars, and jemidars, who were a sort of superior security for other Indians, and these still for others; so that the produce of the lands passed on, and was partly sunk amidst a multitude of intermediate hands, before it came into the coffers of the subah, who, on his part, delivered but a very small portion of it to the emperor. This administration, faulty in many respects, had in it one favourable circumstance for the people, that the farmers never being changed, the rent of the farms remained always the same; because the least increase, as it disturbed the whole chain of advantage which every one received in his turn, would infallibly have occasioned a revolt: a terrible resource, but the only one left in favour of humanity, in countries groaning under the oppressions of despotic rulers.

It is probable that in the midst of these regulations there were many acts of injustice and partial oppressions. But, at least, as the assessment of the public monies was made at a fixed and moderate rate, emulation was not wholly extinguished. The cultivators of the land being sure of laying up the produce of their harvest, after paying with exactness the rate of their farm, seconded the natural fertility of the soil by their labour; the weavers, masters of the price of their works, being at liberty to make choice of the buyer who best suited them, exerted themselves in extending and improving their manufactures. Both the one and the other, having no anxiety with regard to their subsistence, yielded with satisfaction to the most delightful inclinations of nature, or the prevailing propensity of these climates; and beheld, in the increase of their family, one method of augmenting their riches. Such are evidently the reasons why industry, agriculture, and population, have been carried to such a height in the province of Bengal. It should seem that they might still be carried further under the government of a free people, friends to humanity; but the thirst of gold, the most tormenting,

the most cruel of all passions, has given rise to a pernicious and destructive administration.

The English, become sovereigns of Bengal, not content with receiving the revenues on the same footing as the ancient subahs, have been desirous at once to augment the produce of the farms, and to appropriate to themselves the benefit of them. To accomplish both these objects, they are become the farmers to their own subah, that is, to a slave on whom they have just conferred that empty title, the more securely to impose upon the people. The consequence of this new plan has been to pillage the farmers, in order to substitute in their room the company's agents. They have also monopolized the sale of salt, tobacco, and betel, articles of immediate necessity in those countries, but they have done this under the name, and apparently on account of, the subah. They have gone still further, and have obliged the very same subah to establish in their favour an exclusive privilege for the sale of cotton brought from any other province, in order to raise it to an exorbitant price. They have augmented the customs, and have at length caused an edict to be published, which forbids every European, except the English, from trading in the interior parts of Bengal.

When we reflect on this cruel prohibition, it seems as if it had been contrived only to deprive of every power of mischief that unfortunate country, whose prosperity, for their own interest, ought to be the only object of the English company. Besides, it is easy to see that the personal avarice of the members of the council at Calcutta has dictated that shameful law. Their design was to ensure themselves the produce of all the manufactures, in order to compel the merchants of other nations, who chose to trade from one part of India to another, to purchase these articles of them at an exorbitant price, or to renounce their undertakings.

But still, in the midst of this overbearing conduct, so contrary to the advantage of their constituents, these treacherous agents have attempted to disguise themselves under the mask of zeal. They have pretended, that as they were under the necessity of exporting to England a quantity of merchandize proportioned to the extent of



her commerce, the competition of private traders was prejudicial to the purchases of the company.

Under the same pretence, and in order to extend this exclusion to the foreign settlements, while they appear to respect their rights, they have of late years ordered more merchandize than Bengal could furnish. At the same time the weavers have been forbidden to work for other nations until the English company's orders were completed. Thus the workmen, not being any longer at liberty to choose among the several purchasers, have been forced to deliver the fruits of their labour at any price they could get for them.

Let us consider too in what coin these workmen have been paid. Here reason is confounded; and we are at a loss for excuses or pretexts. The English, conquerors of Bengal, possessors of the immense treasures which the fruitfulness of the soil, and the industry of the inhabitants, had collected, have debased themselves so far as to alter the value of the specie. They have set the example of this meanness, unknown to the despotic rulers of Asia; and it is by this disgraceful act that they have announced to the natives their sovereignty over them. An operation, indeed, so contrary to the principles of trade and public faith, could not subsist for any length of time. The company themselves found the pernicious effects of it, and were resolved to call in all the base coin, in order to replace it with other money, exactly the same as that which was always current in those countries. But let us attend to the manner in which so necessary an alteration was conducted.

They had struck in gold rupees to the amount of about fifteen millions [625,000l.] nominal value, but which represented, in fact, but nine millions [375,000l.] for four-tenths, or something more, was alloy. All who were found to possess these gold rupees of false alloy, were enjoined to bring them into the treasury at Calcutta, where they should be reimbursed for them in silver rupees; but instead of ten rupees and a half of silver, which each gold rupee ought to be worth according to its rate, they gave them but six; so that the amount of the alloy became the clear loss of the creditor.

An oppression so general must necessarily be attended

with violence ; and consequently it has been necessary several times to have recourse to force of arms to carry into execution the orders of the council at Calcutta. These forces have not been employed against the Indians alone ; tumults have also broken out, and military preparations been made on all sides, even in the midst of peace. The Europeans have been exposed to signal acts of hostility, and particularly the French, who, notwithstanding their being so reduced and so weak, have still excited the jealousy of their former rivals.

If to this picture of public oppressions, we were to add that of private extortions, we should find the agents of the company, almost everywhere, exacting their tribute with extreme rigour, and raising contributions with the utmost cruelty. We should see them carrying a kind of inquisition into every family, and sitting in judgment upon every fortune ; robbing indiscriminately the artisan and the labourer, imputing it often to a man as a crime that he is not sufficiently rich, and punishing him accordingly. We should view them selling their favour and their credit, as well to oppress the innocent, as to screen the guilty. We should find, in consequence of these irregularities, despair seizing every heart, and an universal dejection getting the better of every mind, and uniting to put a stop to the progress and activity of commerce, agriculture, and population.

It will be thought, without doubt, after these details, it was impossible that Bengal should have fresh evils to dread. But, however, as if the elements, in league with mankind, had intended to bring all at once upon the same people every calamity that by turns lays waste the universe, a drought, of which there never had been an instance in those climates, came upon them, and prepared the way for a most dreadful famine in a country of all the most fertile.

In Bengal there are two harvests ; one in April, the other in October. The first, called the little harvest, consists of the smaller grain : the second, styled the grand harvest, is singly of rice. The rains, which commence regularly in the month of August, and end in the middle of October, are the occasion of these different productions ; and it was by a drought, which happened in 1769,

at the season when the rains are expected, that there was a failure in the great harvest of 1769, and the less harvest of 1770. It is true, that the rice on the higher grounds did not suffer greatly by this disturbance of the seasons, but there was far from a sufficient quantity for the nourishment of all the inhabitants of the country; add to which, the English, who were engaged beforehand to take proper care of their subsistence, as well as of that of the sipahis belonging to them, did not fail to keep locked up in their magazine a part of this harvest, though it was already insufficient.

They have been accused of having made a very bad use of that necessary foresight, in order to carry on the most odious and the most criminal of all monopolies. It may be true that such a horrid method of acquiring riches may have tempted some individuals; but that the chief agents of the company, that the council of Calcutta could have adopted and ordered such a destructive scheme; that to gain a few millions of rupees, the council should coolly have devoted to destruction several millions of their fellow-creatures, and by the most cruel means; this is a circumstance we never can give credit to. We even venture to pronounce it impossible; because such wickedness could never enter at once into the minds and hearts of a set of men, whose business it is to deliberate and act for the good of others.

This calamity, however, was soon felt throughout the extent of Bengal. Rice, which was commonly sold at one shilling [ $\frac{1}{2}$ d.] for three pounds increased gradually till it came so high as to be sold at four shillings [2d.] per pound, and it has even risen to five or six shillings [about 3d.] neither indeed was there any to be found, except in such places where the Europeans had taken care to collect it for their own use.

The unhappy Indians were every day perishing by thousands in this famine, without any means of help and without any resource, not being able to procure themselves the least nourishment. They were to be seen in their villages, along the public ways, in the midst of our European colonies, pale, meagre, fainting, emaciated, consumed by famine; some stretched on the ground in expectation of dying, others scarce able to drag themselves on

to seek for any food, and throwing themselves at the feet of the Europeans, entreating them to take them in as their slaves.

To this description, which makes humanity shudder, let us add other objects equally shocking ; let imagination enlarge upon them, if possible ; let ~~us~~ present to ourselves infants deserted, some expiring on the breasts of their mothers ; everywhere the dying and the dead mingled together ; on all sides the groans of sorrow, and the tears of despair ; and we shall then have some faint idea of the horrible spectacle Bengal presented for the space of six weeks.

During this whole time the Ganges was covered with carcases ; the fields and highways were choked up with them ; infectious vapours filled the air, and diseases multiplied ; and one evil succeeding another, it was likely to happen, that the plague might have carried off the remainder of the inhabitants of that unfortunate kingdom. It appears, by calculations pretty generally acknowledged, that the famine carried off a fourth part ; that is to say, about three millions.

But it is still more remarkable, and serves to characterize the gentleness, or rather the indolence, as well moral as natural, of the natives, that amidst this terrible distress, such a multitude of human creatures, pressed by the most urgent of all necessities, remained in an absolute inactivity, and made no attempts whatever for their self-preservation. All the Europeans, especially the English, were possessed of magazines. These were even respected, as well as private houses ; no revolt, no massacre, nor the least violence prevailed. The unhappy Indians, resigned to despair, confined themselves to the request of succour they did not obtain, and peaceably waited the relief of death.

Let us now represent to ourselves any part of Europe afflicted by a similar calamity. What disorder ! what fury ! what atrocious acts ! what crimes would ensue ! How should we have seen among us Europeans, some contending for their food with their dagger in hand, some pursuing, some flying, and, without remorse, massacring one another ! How should we have seen men at last turn their rage on themselves, tearing and devouring their own

limbs, and in the blindness of despair, trampling under foot all authority, as well as every sentiment of nature and reason !

Had it been the fate of the English to have had the like events to dread on the part of the people of Bengal, perhaps the famine would have been less general and less destructive. For, setting aside, as perhaps we ought, every charge of monopoly, no one will undertake to defend them against the reproach of negligence and insensibility. And in what crisis have they merited that reproach ? In the very instant of time when the life or death of several millions of their fellow-creatures was in their power. One would think, that, in such an alternative, the very love of human kind, that sentiment innate in all hearts, might have inspired them with resources. Might not the poor wretches, expiring before the eyes of the Europeans, with reason have cried out, “ is it then  
“ but for our ruin that you are fertile in expedients for  
“ your own preservation ? The immense treasures which a  
“ long succession of ages had accumulated in this country,  
“ you have made your own spoils ; you have transported  
“ them into your own country ; you have levied your contributions on us ; you have got your agents to receive  
“ them for you ; you are masters of our interior commerce ; you are the sole managers of all our exported  
“ merchandize ; your numerous vessels, laden with the  
“ produce of our industry and our soil, pour riches into  
“ your factories, and into your colonies. All these things  
“ you regulate, and you carry on solely for your own advantage. But what have you done for our preservation ? What steps have you taken to remove from us  
“ the scourge that threatened us ? Deprived of all authority, stripped of our property, weighed down by the terrible hand of power, we can only lift our hands to you  
“ to implore your assistance. Ye have heard our groans ;  
“ ye have seen famine making very quick advances upon  
“ us ; and then ye attended to your own preservation.  
“ Ye have hoarded up the small quantity of provisions  
“ which escaped the pestilence ; ye have filled your granaries with them, and distributed them among your soldiers. But us, the sad dupes of your avarice, wretches  
“ in every respect, as well by your tyranny as by your in-

“ difference, ye treat us like slaves, while ye suppose we  
 “ have any riches ; but, when it appears we are but a set  
 “ of beings full of wants, then you no longer regard us  
 “ even as human creatures. Of what service is it to us  
 “ that you have the management of our public forces en-  
 “ tirely in your hands ? Where ~~are the~~ laws and the mo-  
 “ rals of which ye are so proud ? What then is that go-  
 “ vernment whose wisdom you so much boast of ? Have  
 “ ye put a stop to the prodigious exports made by your  
 “ private traders ? Have ye changed the destination of  
 “ your ships ? Have they traversed the neighbouring  
 “ seas in search of the means of subsistence for us ? Have  
 “ ye requested it of the adjacent countries ? Ah ! why  
 “ has Providence suffered you to break the chain which  
 “ attached us to our ancient sovereigns ? Less grasping,  
 “ and more humane than ye are, they would have invited  
 “ plenty from all parts of Asia ; they would have opened  
 “ every communication ; they would have lavished their  
 “ treasures, and have thought they did but enrich them-  
 “ selves while they preserved their subjects.”

This last reflection, at least, was calculated to make an impression on the English, supposing even that every sentiment of humanity was extinguished in their hearts by the effects of depravity. The barrenness had been announced by a drought ; and it is not to be doubted, that if, instead of having solely a regard to themselves, and remaining in an entire negligence of every thing else, they had from the first taken every precaution in their power, they might have accomplished the preservation of many lives that were lost.

It must be allowed, that the corruption to which the English gave themselves up from the first beginning of their power, the oppression which succeeded it, the abuses every day multiplying, the entire loss of all principle ; all these circumstances together form a contrast totally inconsistent with their past conduct in India, and the real constitution of their government in Europe. But this sort of problem in morals will be easily solved, upon considering with attention the natural effect of circumstances and events.

Being now become absolute rulers in an empire where they were but traders, it was very difficult for the Eng-

lish not to make a bad use of their power. At a distance from their country, men are no longer restrained by the fear of blushing before their countrymen. In a hot climate, where the body loses its vigour, the mind must lose some of its strength. In a country where nature and custom lead to indulgence, men are apt to be seduced. In regions where they come for the purpose of enriching themselves, they easily forget to be just.

Perhaps, however, in a situation so dangerous, the English would at least have preserved some appearance of moderation and virtue, had they been checked by the restraint of the laws: but there were none to direct or to bind them. The regulations made by the company, for the carrying on of their commerce, were not applicable to this new arrangement of affairs; and the English government, considering the conquest of Bengal but as a help towards increasing numerically the revenue of Great Britain, gave up to the company, for 9,000,000 of livres [375,000*l.*] per annum, the destiny of twelve millions of people.

These unfortunate victims of insatiate cupidity were oppressed with all the scourges that tyranny could collect; and the company, which ordered or connived at all these crimes, was not the less threatened with total ruin. This would have been completed, if, in 1773, authority had not stepped in to their assistance, and enabled them to fulfil the rash engagements they had entered into; but the parliament ordered that all the details of this corrupt administration should be submitted to its inspection; that the numerous frauds and violences which had been committed should be publicly unmasked; and that the rights of a whole people should be weighed in the scale of liberty and justice.

Yes, august legislators, ye will fulfil our expectations; ye will restore mankind their rights; ye will put a curb on avarice, and break the yoke of tyranny. The immovable authority of law shall be substituted in all parts to an administration merely arbitrary, At sight of this authority, monopoly, that tyrant over industry, will for ever disappear. The fetters which private interest has rivetted upon commerce ye will strike off in favour of general advantage.

You will not confine yourselves to this momentary reformation. You will carry your views into futurity ; you will calculate the influence of climate, the danger of circumstances, the contagion of example ; and, to prevent their effects, you will select persons without connections, without passions, to visit these distant countries ; issuing from the bosom of your metropolis, they are to pass through these provinces, in order to hear complaints, rectify abuses, redress injuries ; in a word, to maintain and reunite the ties of order throughout the country.

By the execution of this salutary plan, you will, without doubt, have done much towards the happiness of these people, but not enough for your own honour. One prejudice you have still to conquer, and that victory is worthy of yourselves. Make your new subjects enjoy the sweets of property. Portion out to them the fields on which they were born : they will learn to cultivate them for themselves. Attached to you by these favours, more than ever they were by fear, they will pay with joy the tribute you impose with moderation. They will instruct their children to adore and admire your government ; and successive generations will transmit, with their inheritance, the sentiments of their happiness mixed with that of their gratitude.

Then shall the friends of mankind applaud your success, they will indulge the hope of seeing prosperity once more revive in a country embellished by nature, and no longer ravaged by despotism. It will be pleasing to them to think that the calamities which afflicted those fertile countries are forever removed from them. They will pardon in you those usurpations which have been only set on foot for the sake of despoiling tyrants ; and they will invite you to new conquests, when they see the influence of your sublime constitution extending itself even to the very extremities of Asia, to give birth to liberty, property, and happiness.

*Measures taken by the government and company to put an end to depredations.*

LET us now inquire whether these hopes, founded upon the high opinion which the British legislature must necessarily inspire us with, were realized. First, to prevent an inevitable bankruptcy, the effects of which would have been



spread to a great distance, the government permitted the company to borrow 31,500,000 livres [1,312,500*l.*] at an interest of four per cent. This sum has been successively reimbursed, and the last payment made in the month of December 1776.

The parliament afterwards released the company from the annual tribute of 9,000,000 of livres [375,000*l.*] which they paid to the treasury since 1769. The period for the renewal of this contribution was not yet settled. It was only resolved, that the proprietors should not receive a dividend of more than eight per cent. without sharing the overplus with the government.

The fate of the proprietors also engaged the attention of government. The trade of India was ill understood, and conducted upon very uncertain principles in the last century, the consequence of this was, that, in some instances, enormous profits were made, and in others considerable losses incurred. The dividends received by the proprietors were regulated by these fluctuations. In process of time these differences decreased, but the dividends were never equal. In 1708, they were no more than five per cent.; in 1709, they arose to eight, and 1710, to nine. For eleven years subsequent to this they remained at ten, and were at eight only from 1721 to 1731. From that period to 1743, they did not exceed seven per cent. From 1743 to 1756, they rose to eight, but fell to six from 1756 to 1766. In 1767, they rose to ten, and were increased successively, by two per cent. more, the following years. In 1771, they were carried as far as twelve and a half; but, eighteen months afterwards the parliament reduced them to six, till the payment of 31,500,000 livres [1,312,500*l.*] was completed. The company having fulfilled this engagement, raised their dividend to seven and afterwards to eight, when they had paid off the half of their debt, known under the name of bills of contract, and which amounted to 67,500,000 livres [2,812,500*l.*]

Since the origin of the company, the proprietors have always chosen annually twenty-four persons from among them, to conduct their affairs. Although these directors may be chosen three times successively, and although those who are most in repute frequently succeed in obtain-

ing this advantage, yet they were too much dependent upon their constituents to form any connected plans, or to adopt any resolute measures. The parliament ordered, that, for the future, every director should remain for four years, and that the fourth part of the ~~direction~~ should be renewed every year.

The confusion that prevailed in the deliberations suggested the idea of another regulation. Hitherto the public meetings had been tumultuous, because every proprietor of 11,250 livres [468l. 15s.] had a right to vote. It was resolved, that for the future, this right should only be granted to those who had double that sum. They were even compelled to affirm upon oath that they were really proprietors of this capital, and had been so for a whole year.

It is said that government had further views. They intended to reduce the number of directors to fifteen, to increase their appointments from 22,500 livres [937l. 10s.] to 45,000 livres [1875l.] and to liberate them from the controul of the proprietors. If this plan, which was to give so much influence to ministers had been really formed, some unforeseen circumstances must have prevented it from being carried into execution.

Independent of the changes ordered by parliament, the company itself made an arrangement of evident utility.

This great association, from their first origin, were ambitious of having a navy. It was annihilated when they renewed their commerce, in the time of the protector. As they were then eager to enjoy the benefit of this trade, they resolved to make use of the ships of private persons; and the plan they adopted at first from necessity, they persevered in afterwards from motives of economy. Merchants used to freight ships for them, completely equipped and victualled, to convey to India, and to bring back from thence the number of tons agreed upon. The time they were to remain at the place of their destination was always fixed. Those which could not be supplied with cargoes were usually taken by some free merchant, who readily engaged to indemnify the owners. They were to be dispatched the first in the ensuing season, in order that their rigging might not be too much worn. In cases of

necessity, the company used to furnish them with rigging from their own stores; but they were paid for them at a stipulated price of fifty per cent. profit.

The ships employed in this navigation carried from six to eight hundred tons. The company, at their departure, only took the room they wanted for their iron, lead, copper, woollen stuffs, and Madeira wines, the only merchandize they sent to India. The proprietors might fill up the remaining space in the ship with the provisions necessary for so long a voyage, and with all the articles which the company they served did not make objects of their trade. At their return, they had also the right of disposing of the space of thirty tons, which, by their contract, they had reserved. They were even authorized to fill up this space with the same goods that were received by the company, but upon condition that they should pay thirty per cent. on the value of them.

In 1773, this tax was reduced to the half, in hopes that this favour would induce the owners and their agents to fulfil their engagements with more exactness, and that it would put a stop to fraudulent imports. This new arrangement not having had the effect that was expected from it, the company at length took the resolution to appropriate to their own use all the space of these ships. Since this resolution, they import the same quantity of merchandize on a smaller number of vessels, by which they make an annual saving of 2,250,000 livres [93,750*l.*] In 1777, they sent out only forty-five ships, consisting of thirty-three thousand one hundred and sixty-one tons, and the crews of which amounted to four thousand five hundred men.

The surgeon of each vessel, on its return from India, receives, besides his appointments, a gratuity of four and twenty livres [1*l.*] for each man he brings back to Europe. It has been thought, with reason, that this surgeon, when better rewarded, would take more care of those that were intrusted to him, and that the life of a man was worth more than a guinea. If the same custom has not been adopted elsewhere, it is either because they have a higher opinion of the surgeon, or a less value for man.

The reformation introduced in Europe in the manage-

ment of the company was wise and necessary ; but it was chiefly in the Indies that humanity, justice, and policy, were subverted. These dreadful truths not escape the notice of government ; and we shall now see what means were suggested to them for the re-establishment of order.

The boldest or most ~~ambitious~~ members of the administration advanced, that the legislative body ought to decide, that the territorial acquisitions made in Asia did not belong to the company, but to the nation, which would immediately take possession of them. This system, upon whatever grounds of reasoning it might have been supported, would certainly have been rejected. The most enlightened among the citizens would have seen that this arrangement would have given too much influence to the crown ; it would have alarmed even those venal minds which had hitherto been most partial to regal authority.

The parliament then thought proper to confine itself to the establishment of a supreme council in Bengal, composed of five members, whose places, when they became vacated, were to filled up by the company, but with the approbation of the king. The absolute direction of all the provinces conquered in the country was conferred on this council, whose jurisdiction extends also over all the other parts of India in which the English have possessions. Persons who are in power there cannot make either war or peace, or enter into any treaty with the princes of the country, without the consent of this council. It is to obey all the orders sent from the directors, who in their turn are obliged to impart to the ministry all the intelligence they receive. Although the operations of commerce be not immediately under the inspection of this council, yet it has in reality the decision of them ; because, having the sole disposal of the public revenues, it can grant or refuse advances at pleasure.

After having placed the banks of the Ganges under a more tolerable form of government, it became necessary to attend to the punishment, and even the prevention, of the enormities with which this rich part of Asia was more and more sullied. It was agreed, that, in all the other settlements, civil and criminal justice should continue to be render-

ed by the principal servants of the company : but the parliament created for Bengal a tribunal, composed of four magistrates, who were appointed by the crown, and whose decrees could not be reversed, except by the king in his privy council. These judges, as well as the members of the ~~supreme~~ council, are not allowed to have any concern in trade. To indemnify them for this prohibition, the incomes ~~assigned~~ them have been too considerable, at least in the opinion of the proprietors, who are obliged to pay them, without having either regulated or consented to them.

Another very great abuse had been introduced into India ; and this was the raising of fortifications in all parts without necessity, sometimes even without any apparent utility. It was the cupidity of the company's agents alone which determined these constructions. They had cost upwards of 100,000,000 of livres [4,166,666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*] in very few years. The direction put a stop to this dreadful evil, by wisely regulating the sum to be employed in future in this sort of defence.

The spirit of order extended itself to the management of the public revenues, to the pay of the troops, to the military part of the navy, to the operations of commerce, and to the objects of administration.

The great mogul had taken refuge in Bengal, and a pension had been assigned to him of 6,240,000 livres [260,000*l.*] for his subsistence. He was replaced upon the throne by the Marattas ; and the English were relieved from a kind of tribute which they did not submit to without impatience, since they were no longer in need of this feeble support. Chance was not so favourable to them in their schemes of stripping the subah of his country ; and yet they reduced to 7,680,000 livres [320,000*l.*] the revenue of 12,720,000 livres [530,000*l.*] which, by the treaty 1765, they were obliged to pay him. In 1771, his successor was even restrained to 3,840,000 livres [160,000*l.*] upon pretence that he was a minor. He may expect to have his revenue still more curtailed, because his name is now never made use of, which, till the year 1772, was inserted in all acts of sovereignty.

It was impossible that all these reformations should not

fill up the precipice which presumption, neglect, factions, plunder, and extravagances of all kinds, had digged for the company. We shall judge how much their situation has been improved.

*Present situation of the company.* On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1774, this body, the apparent prosperity of which astonished the whole universe, had not more than 255,240,742 livres ten sols [10,635,031l. 8s. 9d.] Their debts amounted to 250,847,842 livres ten sols [10,451,993l. 8s. 9d.] the balance in their favour, therefore, was only 4,392,900 livres [183,037l. 10s.]

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1776, their capital amounted to 256,518,067 livres ten sols [10,688,252l. 16s. 3d.] and their debts to 195,248,655l. livres [8,135,356l. 9s. 2d.] Their treasure was consequently increased in two years by 56,876,512 livres ten sols [2,369,854l. 13s. 9d.]

They have since paid off 11,506,680 livres [479,445l.] which remained due of the loan of 31,500,000 livres [1,312,500l.] They have taken up 11,250,000 livres [468,750l.] in bills of contract. They have discharged several debts formerly contracted in India; so that, on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 1778, the company had, at their free and entire disposal, the sum of 102,708,112 livres ten sols [4,279,504l. 13s.] exclusive of their magazines, their ships, their fortifications, and every thing which is of use in maintaining their several settlements.

This prosperity will increase in proportion as the immense territory acquired by the English in India shall be better administered. In 1773, their possessions returned 113,791,252 livres ten sols [4,741,302l. 3s. 9d.] but the expences of collecting this sum absorbed 81,153,652 livres ten sols [3,381,402l. 3s. 9d.] At this period, then, the net produce amounted only to 32,660,100 livres [1,360,837l. 10s.] It has gradually increased, because some of the evils have been attacked with success; it will increase still more because there are still many left to destroy.

The extension that has been given to the trade will prove another source of fortune. The sale of 1772 amounted to 79,214,872 livres ten sols [3,300,619l. 13s. 9d.]; that of 1773, to 71,992,552 livres ten sols [2,999,689l. 13s. 4d.];

that of 1774, to 82,665,405 livres [3,444,391l. 17s. 6d.]; that of 1775, to 78,627,712 livres ten sols [3,276,155l. 3s. 9d.]; that of 1776, to 74,400,457 livres ten sols [3,100,019l. 1s. 3d.]

Let us add to these great transactions of the company the sum of 11,250,000 livres [468,750l.] at which the merchandize annually brought clandestinely from the Indies is estimated. Let us add 4,500,000 livres [187,500l.] for the diamonds. Let us add the funds, more or less extensive, but always very considerable, the value of which the English, distributed in the different factories of Asia, have furnished to foreign nations. Let us add the riches which these merchants themselves carry away when they have amassed them, to go and enjoy them in their own country. Let us observe at the same time, that these vast speculations, which render all the people of Africa, Europe, and America, tributary to Great Brittain, do not take annually out of that empire for the Indies more than 2,250,000 livres [93,750l.] or at the utmost 3,375,000 livres [140,625l.]; and we shall have an idea of the immense advantages which these distant colonies procure to the fortunate possessors of them.

In 1780 the charter of the company will expire, and every thing seems to promise that it will be renewed. Government, after having secured to itself the major part of the produce of those conquests, will deliver up again these regions to the oppressive yoke of monopoly.

“ Unfortunate Indians? endeavour to reconcile yourselves to your chains. In vain have your supplications been carried to the ministry, to the senate, and to the people. The ministry think only of themselves; the senate is raving; and the wise part of the people are either silent, or their words are not attended to. The rapacious and cruel association of merchants that has caused your misfortunes not only aggravates them, but looks upon them with tranquillity. Privileged robbers! ye who for so long a time have kept a great part of the globe under the fetters of prohibition, and who have condemned it to eternal poverty, was not this tyranny sufficient for you? must you still add to the weight of it, by crimes which render the name of your country execrable?

" What did I say, your country ! I doubt whether  
 " you have any. But if the voice of private interest alone  
 " can awaken your attention, listen to it, while it ex-  
 " claims by me, that you are precipitating yourselves into  
 " ruin. Your tyranny is hastening to its end. After the  
 " monstrous abuse you have made of your authority, whe-  
 " ther it be renewed or not, it will cease. Do you think  
 " that the nation, when roused, as it will be, from its  
 " present delirium and intoxication, will not call upon you  
 " to answer for your oppressions ? Or that he will not be  
 " made to expiate your enormities by the loss of your  
 " criminal riches, and perhaps by the effusion of your cor-  
 " rupted blood ? You deceive yourselves, if you think  
 " that they will be forgotten. The horrid spectacle of  
 " so many immense regions pillaged, ravaged, or reduced  
 " to the most cruel servitude, will be displayed before us  
 " again. The earth now covers the carcasses of three  
 " millions of men, who have perished through your fault  
 " or neglect : but they will be taken up again out of the  
 " ground ; they will cry out to heaven and to the earth  
 " for vengeance, and will obtain it. Time and circum-  
 " stances will only suspend your punishment. I see the  
 " period approaching when you will be recalled, and your  
 " souls impressed with terror. I behold you dragged in-  
 " to the dungeons that you deserve. I view you upon  
 " your coming out of them. I see you brought pale and  
 " trembling before your judges. I hear the exclamations  
 " of the people, in fury collected about their tribunals.  
 " The intimidated orator falters in his harangue. Shame  
 " and dread have taken possession of him, and he has given  
 " up your cause ; the confiscation of your estates, and  
 " the sentence of your death, are pronounced. My me-  
 " naces, perhaps, only excite in you a smile of contempt.  
 " You have persuaded yourselves, that men who can  
 " throw masses of gold into the scale of justice will make  
 " it incline at pleasure. Perhaps even you flatter your-  
 " selves that the nation corrupted, while it prolongs your  
 " charter, will avow itself guilty of the crimes you have  
 " committed, and an accomplice of those you may here-  
 " after commit."

But this will not be the case ; justice will sooner or  
 later be exercised. If it were otherwise, I would address



myself to the populace; I would say to them: people, whose clamours have so often caused your masters to tremble, what are you now waiting for? For what occasion do you reserve your torches, and the stones that pave your streets? ~~Tear the~~ <sup>But</sup> the upright citizens, if there be some left, will at length be roused. They will perceive that the spirit of monopoly is narrow and cruel; that it is insensible to the public good; and that it cannot be restrained by the idea of either present or future censure. They will find that this spirit sees nothing beyond the present moment; and that in the paroxysm of its frenzy, it has pronounced at all times, and among all nations, the following decree:

“ Let my country perish, let the region I command  
 “ perish likewise; perish the citizen and the foreigner;  
 “ perish my associate, provided I can but enrich myself  
 “ with his spoils. All parts of the universe are alike to me.  
 “ When I have laid waste, exhausted, and impoverished,  
 “ one country, I shall always find another, to which I  
 “ may carry my gold, and enjoy it in peace.”



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